Comparing the Buddha's teachings

in the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra

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COMPARING THE BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS

IN THE LOTUS SUTRA AND THE MAHAPARINIRVANA SUTRA

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I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted
as an exercise for a degree at any other institution,
and that it is entirely my own work.

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Abstract

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Abstract

In the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha clearly taught that the purpose of the World-Honored Ones appearing in the world is to show sentient beings the Buddha's Knowledge[1], but why don't we realize that each person has Buddha nature? Buddha nature is like gold that is already present in ore; to obtain pure gold, one must go through refining. People who want to see Buddha nature must go through cultivation and training of the mind. It is a long and diligent journey. The Buddha, through his own realization, found the path to escape suffering and attain Buddhahood. The road is long and arduous, so many suitable means must be used, such as when traveling on a village road, using a bicycle, when encountering a river or stream, using a boat, on a highway, using a car, on a long road, using an airplane, etc., the purpose is to reach the destination. Living beings have many capacities, so the Buddha used many means called the Three Vehicles of Buddhism, which are the stages of the road, sometimes having to stop and rest, but to reach the destination, there is

[1] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, Expedient Means Chapter, P. 66

only one path, called the One Vehicle or Buddha Vehicle[2]. The path was analyzed and clearly shown by the Tathagata in his teachings in the last years of his life, that is the path of a person practicing the Bodhisattva Path. However, all the Buddha's teachings are only means, using language to describe the wonderful Dharma. In the Diamond Sutra, the Buddha asked Subhuti "Do I preach the Dharma?" The Buddha affirmed that for 50 years the Buddha did not say a single word. The Tathagata's declaration shocked everyone who heard it. This is the word of an omniscient being, that what the Buddha said was what had existed, the Buddha was just a person who, depending on the audience, described what had existed that he had realized, and so that his disciples and future generations would not cling to language, debate right or wrong, but would use actual evidence. Buddhists who practice the Buddha's Dharma rely on expedient means but need to understand the Buddha's teachings to practice correctly. Using the method of comparing the teachings in the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra contributes to making the Buddha's teachings clear, correct in principle, and the intention so that when practicing, one does not go astray. Going on the right path, each step is a step towards the destination. Going on the wrong path, the further away from where one needs to go.

[2] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, Preface Chapter, P.39

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Chapter I- Introduction

1- Background of the Study

During his 50 years of preaching the Dharma, the Buddha preached many sutras, depending on the audience he wanted to educate. The Buddha's daily work began in the morning, when he observed sentient beings to see who would be destined to be converted by him that day. Saying that the Buddha had 84,000 Dharma practices is a metaphor that sentient beings have many knots that need to be untied, and each situation is a Dharma practice to untie that person's suffering and pain. The Buddha's teachings are immeasurable, likened to a vast ocean, but during their practice, the Buddha's great disciples arranged them in order: When he first attained enlightenment, the Buddha preached the Avatamsaka Sutra for 21 days to the devas, followed by the Agamas for 12 years, the Vaipulya Sutra for 8 years, the Prajnaparamita Sutra for 22 years, and the last eight years, the Buddha preached the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra. Through this we see that the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra are the teachings of the First Noble Truth, belonging to the category of definitive meaning sutras, that is, sutras with ultimate true meaning. The teachings in the last years of his life, when his disciples had heard and practiced many teachings, it was time to hear the most profound and wonderful words[3] . The Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra are the two main sutras belonging to the Mahayana teachings. The teachings that preceded these teachings are like expedient means to guide each step in a long journey until reaching the destination of eliminating all suffering, which is Nirvana.

[3] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, Chapter on Expedient Means. P 66-68

2- Intention of the Study

Among Buddhists who practice the Mahayana teachings, many people have been reading and reciting the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra every day, but perhaps among them, understanding deeply each teaching with its profound meaning and applying it to daily practice is still limited. Even though the Buddha clearly taught the path to escape suffering, sentient beings are still mired in suffering due to birth, aging, sickness and death. This is not excluded among the disciples of the Sangha. Many temples have been built, and Buddhists are numerous, but in many places, many practitioners still cling to formalities of belief and worship, thinking that this is practicing and neglecting to understand what the Buddha taught. Therefore, the Buddha said, to respect me without understanding me is the same as slander. If we worship the Buddha every day without understanding and following what the Buddha earnestly wanted to transmit, Buddhism will gradually fade away. We have been separated from the Buddha for more than 2,600 years, and according to historical time, we are in the Dharma-ending Age, but if the Buddha's teachings are still studied, followed, and continued to be transmitted, then the Dharma will never fade away. When the sutras are learned, the profound meaning is clearly understood, and the practice is implemented, finding happiness in the present moment, then that is an extremely practical thing.

3- Significance of the Study

The decision to choose this topic for research, for me personally, is an opportunity to deeply learn the profound and wonderful words of an enlightened being, to urge myself in my practice and to inspire those who have the same mind and heart. The Buddha's words are valuable when

they bring benefits in the life of practice, reducing suffering and suffering, and having a happy and peaceful life right in the present. Without joy and happiness in the present, it is certain that there cannot be happiness in the future. The Buddha's teachings have profound and wonderful meanings, only when one enters them can one fully understand the meaning, like a person drinking hot or cold water and knowing for himself. In the Buddhist scriptures, it is said, "Only Buddha and Buddha can fully understand the true nature of all dharmas"[4]. Seeing the meaning of the Buddha's teachings helps the Buddha Dharma to be preserved for a long time. When the Buddha's teachings are not thoroughly understood, there will be many regrettable mistakes in studying and practicing the Dharma. For example, a person thinks that he is cultivating the mind through charity work and practicing the Bodhisattva path to create merit. However, those actions are flaunted and widely introduced to many people through the media. While doing charity work, greed, anger, and ignorance sometimes arise. That is a manifestation of the ego, not the correct practice of the Bodhisattva path. In the Vimalakirti Sutra, the chapter on the Buddha path, Bodhisattva Manjushri asked Vimalakirti: "How can a Bodhisattva understand the Buddha path?". Vimalakirti said: "A Bodhisattva walking on the non-path means understanding the Buddha path."[5] Vimalakirti's words inspire us to think a lot and through studying the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, we can "understand the Buddha path".

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[4] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, Preface Chapter, P.54
[5] Tue Sy, Vimalakirti Sutra, P.211

Chapter II- Literature Review

This chapter will review significant commentarial literature around the Lotus sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra.

1- The Lotus Sutra

The Lotus Sutra is the short name of The Wonderful Dharma Lotus Sutra, one of the most important Mahayana sutras, because it is the Buddha's sermon at Vulture Peak Mountain in the final stage of the Buddha's life of propagating the Dharma. The sutra has been widely circulated in Eastern countries such as China, Vietnam, Japan, Korea... and has been translated into many different languages around the world: Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, English, French, German... Most of these translations are based on the sutra translated from Sanskrit by Tripitaka Master Kumarajiva around 406 AD. In Vietnam, the most popular translations are the translation by layman Thieu Chuu and the translation by Venerable Thich Tri Tinh. The translation of the Mahaparinirvana Sutra by Venerable Thich Minh Chau is based on the Pali version, a long chapter in the Dìgha Nikaya, belonging to the Theravada system.

The Lotus Sutra is a Mahayana Sutra that has been studied by the Japanese. Master Saicho (767-822), a famous Japanese monk, brought this Sutra from China to Japan in 805 and founded the Tendai Sect (also known as the Lotus Sect). In the early 13th century, Master Nichiren Daishen founded Nichiren Buddhism (August 24, 1253) in Japan, a sect of Mahayana Buddhism, taking the Lotus Sutra as the fundamental sutra for practice. The teachings of this sect are that the Lotus Sutra contains the highest truth of Buddhist teachings, represents effective teachings, and has an influence on the political and social peace of a country. The method of practice is simply by

regularly reciting the name Namo Wonderful Dharma Lotus Sutra, so that anyone, in any circumstance, can receive access to Shakyamuni Buddha.[6]

After practicing and personally witnessing the Lotus Sutra, Nichiren developed the ideas from the Tandai School and proposed the Dharma of practicing the Lotus Sutra according to his own methods. Nichiren's name means Lotus blooming at dawn, he practiced chanting the Lotus Sutra, realizing the miraculous effects when practicing. Nichiren's era was the era of the rise of many Buddhist sects in Japan, many outstanding monks founded many new sects, among which Nichiren Sect was a new sect that quickly developed in Japan. For monks, Nichiren Sect proposed three methods: reading, reciting, and copying the Lotus Sutra.

Nichiren Buddhism advises everyone to always recite the Lotus Sutra with a sincere heart, especially to focus on reciting the Lotus Sutra's title to personally sense the inconceivable miraculous power of the Sutra through the recitation: Namo Myõhõ Reng-kyõ (in Japanese, "Namu Myõhõ Reng-kyõ. Kyõ is Sutra, Reng is Lotus, and Myõhõ is Wonderful Dharma). Nichiren believes that Shakyamuni Buddha is the master of the Saha world, and we are people living in the same world as the Buddha, so we should take his teachings as the basis for practice. Nichiren confirms that only with the thought of the Lotus Sutra can this Saha world be saved and freed from suffering.

The Lotus Sutra first appeared about 500 years after the Buddha's death. The Tripitaka master Nagarjuna referred to the Lotus Sutra in his work Mahāprajñāpāramitā. In some East Asian traditions, the Lotus Sutra was compiled together with two other sutras, the Infinite Meanings Sutra and the Samantabhadra Dhyana Sutra, forming the "Three Lotus Sutras". The Infinite Meanings

[6] Thich Tri Quang, Nichiren Saint, Vietnam Buddhist Academy, February 1,2015

Sutra is considered by many Mahāyāna Buddhists to be the prologue to the Lotus Sutra, and Chapter One of the Lotus Sutra states that the Buddha taught the Infinite Meanings immediately before preaching the Lotus Sutra.

In China There are three surviving Chinese translations of the Lotus Sutra. Dharmarakṣa's group in 286 CE at Chang'an during the Western Jin Dynasty (265–317 CE). Kumārajīva's great disciple, Dao Sheng (355–434), wrote the oldest surviving Chinese commentary on the Lotus Sutra (entitled Fahua jing yishū), which argued that the central teaching of the sutra is the One Vehicle; During the Tang Dynasty, Dao Xuan (596–667) wrote that the Lotus Sutra was "the most important sutra in China"; Kuiji (632–682), a disciple of Xuanzang, wrote a commentary on the Lotus Sutra. This commentary was translated into Tibetan and survives in the Tibetan Buddhist canon.

In the West, in the 16th century, Matteo Ricci, an Italian Jesuit priest, traveled to China and founded the Chinese Jesuit missions. One of the first Western references to the Lotus Sutra can be found in his 1603 work The True Doctrine of the Lord of Heaven, where Ricci mentions the Lotus Sutra and condemns its teachings. According to Lopez[7], in 2022, the Holy See declared its recognition of Ricci's heroic virtues, thereby bestowing upon him the title of venerable.

Zen master Rinzai Hakuin Ekaku (1687–1768) was one of the most influential figures in Japanese Zen who considered bodhicitta, working for the benefit of others, to be the ultimate concern of Zen practice. He himself attained enlightenment while reading the third chapter of the Lotus Sutra. Hakuin wrote that when he first read this sutra at the age of sixteen, he was disappointed by it. However, sixteen years later, after experiencing an epiphany, he wrote, “One night, after some time, I read the Lotus Sutra. Suddenly I understood the complete, true, ultimate

[7] A Biography Donald S. Lopez, The Lotus Sūtra, 2016 P. 120

meaning of the Lotus Sutra. My initial doubts were destroyed, and I realized that the understanding I had had until then was very mistaken. I involuntarily let out a loud cry and burst into tears."

In the 19th century, Eugène Burnouf was a French scholar, researcher of Indology and Orientalism, including the study of Sanskrit literature, translations of the Hindu Bhagavata Purana and the Buddhist Lotus Sutra. According to Lopez, this book "seems to have been originally intended to help readers understand the Lotus Sutra". Burnouf's French translation of the Sanskrit manuscript of the Lotus Sutra in Nepali, titled "Le Lotus de la bonne loi traduit du Sanscrit accompagné d'un commentaire et de vingt et un mémoires relatifs au Buddhisme" (in English: "The Lotus of Good Law translated from Sanskrit accompanied by a commentary and twenty-one memoirs relating to Buddhism"), was published posthumously in 1852. According to Jonathan Silk, Burnouf can be considered "the father of modern scientific Buddhist studies". Burnouf appreciated the "parables" found in the Lotus, which reminded him of those in the New Testament, and considered the Lotus to contain "a Christian ethic, full of compassion for all living things". He also understood the Lotus Sutra to be more "developed" than the earlier "simple" sutras, containing more historical content and less metaphysical ideas. A chapter of the Lotus Sutra published in 1844, before Burnouf's translation, was published in The Dial, a New England Transcendentalist publication, and was translated from French into English by Elizabeth Palmer Peabody. This chapter was the first English version of any Buddhist sutra. An English translation of the Lotus Sutra from two Sanskrit manuscripts copied in Nepal around the 11th century was completed by Hendrik Kern in 1884 and published as Saddharma-Pundarîka, or Lotus Sutra of the Law of Truth as part of the Eastern Sacred Books project.

In the 20th century, after World War II, scholarly attention to the Lotus Sutra was inspired by renewed interest in Japanese Buddhism as well as archaeological research at Dunhuang in Gansu, China. In 1976, Leon Hurvitz published The Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma, a scholarly English translation of the Lotus Sutra based on Kumarajiva's Chinese.

Burton Dewitt Watson[8] was an American Sinologist, translator, and writer known for his English translations of Chinese and Japanese literature. Although he worked as a translator for the Soka Gakkai, a Japanese Buddhist organization, he was not a follower of the Nichiren school of Buddhism or a member of the Soka Gakkai. Translations from Chinese include: The Lotus Sutra and the Opening and Closing Sutras[9].

Jacqueline Stone[10] is professor emeritus of Japanese religion in the department of religion at Princeton University and an expert on Japanese Buddhism, especially Kamakura Buddhism, writes that the Lotus Sutra affirms the view that the Buddha is continually present in our present world. According to Jonathan Silk, the influence of the Lotus Sutra in India may have been limited, but "it is a prominent text in East Asian Buddhism." Meanwhile, Jacqueline Stone and Stephen F. Teiser write that "it is probably not an exaggeration to say that the Lotus Sutra is the most influential Buddhist text in East Asia." According to British writer Dennis Philip Edward Lingwood, commonly known as Sangharakshita, an English spiritual teacher and writer, the Lotus uses the entire universe as its stage, using many mythological creatures as actors and "speaking almost exclusively in the language of images."

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[8] Burton Dewitt Watson, (June 13, 1925 – April 1, 2017)
[9] Soka Gakkai, 2009 ISBN 978-4412014091
[10] Jacqueline Stone, born June 30, 1949

According to Gene Reeves, "Japan's greatest twentieth-century poet and storyteller, Kenji Miyazawa, became devoted to the Lotus Sutra, writing to his father on his deathbed that all he wanted to do was share its teachings with others."

American Buddhist scholar Donald S. Lopez Jr. writes that the Lotus Sutra "may be considered the most famous of all Buddhist scriptures," presenting "a radical rethinking of both the Buddhist path and the person of the Buddha"[11].

In addition, the Japanese monk Nichiren (1222–1282) with the Nichiren Lotus Sutra, in the early 20th century, Tanaka Chigaku was a Japanese Buddhist scholar and preacher of Nichiren Buddhism and an ultranationalist propagandist during the Meiji, Taishò, and early Shòwa periods. Nissho Inoue was a radical Buddhist preacher of Nichirenism, founder of the Japanese far-right militant organization between the two world wars; Scholar Jacqueline Stone argues that the Soka Gakkai generally pursued an exclusive approach to the Lotus Sutra, believing that only Nichiren Buddhism could bring about world peace.

The author believes that interest in the Lotus Sutra revolves around these themes:

The sutra uses the lotus flower to represent the wonderful dharma, the true nature, the Buddha nature that exists in every living being. Buddha nature is beyond worldly language, very difficult to describe, so the Buddha used the lotus symbol to describe Buddha nature. The lotus flower has the following characteristics: One is not polluted, the lotus grows from mud, a dirty place, but the flower has risen above the mud, risen above the water, bloomed, and spread a fragrant scent. Two are in a lotus pond, at the bottom is a layer of mud, followed by a layer of very

[11] Donald S. Lopez Jr. White Lotus of the True Dharma

clear water, showing that although living in mud, the lotus is not tainted by the foul smell of mud. For example, a person, although living in this world, surrounded by the five desires, is still noble and beautifies everything around him. Three, the lotus flower is always fresh, blooming in the hot summer, bringing freshness to life, while most other flowers bloom in spring or autumn. Fourth, the lotus flower has the nature of emptiness, from the flower pedestal, the flower stem, the root, the lotus shoot are all hollow inside, showing the characteristic of a practitioner who is to let go of anger, ignorance, and stubbornness, and have a peaceful mind. Fifth, the lotus flower represents simultaneous cause and effect, when the flower has just taken shape, there is already a lotus pedestal and seed inside, showing that a practitioner who sows the cause will reap the result immediately in life. Sixth, the lotus flower is a flower that grows straight from the root rising above the water and blooming. Practitioners have determined the goal of practice, which is to see Buddha nature, then aim for the goal of going straight. Seventh, the lotus flower has the nature of fullness to show that Buddha nature is complete, without deviation.

The Buddha's incarnation in this world has only one purpose: to teach sentient beings to see the Buddha's knowledge, that is, the Buddha nature that all sentient beings have, but because of the obscuration, the Buddha uses many skillful means to guide them, but the ultimate goal is to reach the shore of enlightenment, to become a Buddha. Buddha is the one who reveals, and it is sentient beings who are enlightened to Buddha's knowledge. The sutra is a wonderful dharma, so those who receive, preach, preserve and leave it to future generations will have much merit and are on the path to Buddha's knowledge.

2- The Mahaparinirvana Sutra

The Mahaparinirvana Sutra is the last words of an Enlightened One, leaving earnest instructions to his disciples like the last words of a kind father leaving instructions to his beloved children before passing away, making those who read it moved. The Mahaparinirvana Sutra includes many contents in which the Buddha answers all the remaining questions through the questioning of the Great Bodhisattvas. The Bodhisattvas are like representatives who ask questions of all subjects from ordinary people to Sravakas, Pratyekabuddhas, Bodhisattvas, even the Icchantikas who no longer have any good thoughts, helping the four groups of Buddha's disciples have complete answers in the process of practicing according to His teachings, including those who follow outsiders also have the opportunity to attain liberation and happiness. The last words of the World-Honored One are: "all phenomenas are impermanent, the phenomenas of birth and death, birth and death are extinguished, nirvana is joy"[12]("The law of what is created Is by nature non-eternal. Life ended, we leave the world; Extinction is bliss.")[13]. All Dharmas must be compared, in accordance with the Sutras, Vinaya, and Abhidharma to be considered the true Dharma. Rely on the true Dharma, light your own lamp and rely on it to reach your destination. The Sutra is like a review of important practices of Precepts, Concentration, Wisdom, liberation and liberating knowledge, living in peace, mindfulness, and awareness to completely liberate all desires, to escape suffering, and to attain enlightenment of Nirvana.

The Mahaparinirvana Sutra begins with the Buddha refusing everything and only accepting the offering of the last meal of the Ironworker Cunda, which was a bowl of poisonous mushroom

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[12] In many Sutras

[13] Translated into English by Kosho Yamamoto, 1973 from Dharmakshema's Chinese version, P.22

porridge, but the Buddha accepted it out of compassion so that Cunda could fully offer it. In the life of an Enlightened One, there are two particularly important moments of receiving offerings. As the Buddha taught: "There are two kinds of almsgiving, with the same result; one is to immediately attain Supreme Enlightenment after receiving it, and two is to immediately enter Nirvana after receiving it"[14]. The first time, when Prince Siddhartha realized that the ascetic practice was not the practice that would bring about the ultimate and perfect result, he clearly realized that there was no clear and wise spirit in a weak body. In a lifeless body, he left the Forest of Asceticism, received the offering meal from Sudāta and began to meditate for forty-nine days under the Bodhi tree and attained enlightenment and liberation. After achieving enlightenment, the Buddha gave his first sermon, the Dharmacakravartin Sutta, to the five brothers Kondanna, and this was the first time the “Triple Gem” was formed, consisting of the three elements of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The second important offering meal was the meal the Buddha received from the ironworker Shuddhodana on the last night before the monk passed away and entered nirvana. The Buddha said to Thuan Da “Today, the Tathagata accepts your last offering and gives you the full Dana Paramita”[15]. Before the Buddha entered Nirvana, the ascetic Subhadda begged the Buddha to clarify his doubts, and the Tathagata accepted his request to preach the Eightfold Path. After hearing the wonderful Dharma, he immediately asked to take refuge in the Triple Gem, became a monk, received the Great Precepts, became an enlightened Arhat, and was the last disciple to be converted by the World-Honored One. At the end of the Sutra, there is the Buddha's instruction on how to cremate the Buddha's body and divide the relics to avoid unnecessary disputes later. All of these demonstrate the wisdom of an enlightened being. In his article on

[14] Thich Tri Tinh, MPNS, Volume 1, P. 42
[15] Thich Tri Tinh, MPNS, Volume 1, P. 43

Buddhism in Asia, author Abira Bhattacharya wrote in his article “In Search of Shunyata in Mahayana Buddhism”: “Chapter twenty-eight of the Mahavamsa, considered a Roman work, contains one of the most comprehensive accounts of the distribution of the Buddha’s relics.” The Buddha taught the necessary things clearly and completely; the Sutra describes a panoramic picture at the time of the Buddha's passing away.

Dharmakṣema[16] was an Indian Buddhist monk, missionary, and translator, active in the fifth century CE, who was responsible for several important translation projects while traveling in China. According to Chen, Jinhua[17] "The Indian Buddhist Missionary Dharmakṣema: A New Chronology of His Appearance in Guzang and His Translations". After losing a debate with a Zen master (known as “White Head”), he was given a copy of the Nirvana Sutra by the master, which prompted him to convert to Mahayana. While he was in Dunhuang, that city was defeated by the Northern Liang king Juqu Mengxun in 420 and again in 421. He was skilled in magic and sorcery, served as the royal chaplain and court advisor, and was commissioned by the king to translate the Nirvana Sutra and other Mahayana sutras). According to Blum[18], Dharmakṣema's translation of the Mahāparinirvana Sutra has inspired numerous commentaries on the sutras and is widely quoted by East Asian Buddhist authors. The sutra is an important scriptural source for the idea that all beings have Buddha nature, which is seen as an active force in the world.

Some scholars such as Michael Radich and Shimoda Masahiro have suggested that the Nirvana Sutra may be the earliest source for the idea of Buddha nature. The Nirvana Sutra also

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[16] Dharmakṣema (385–433)
[17] Chen, Jinhua (2004)
[18] Blum, (2013). P. xviii- Blum, Mark L. (2013), The Nirvana Sutra, Vol. 1 (PDF), BDK America

discusses the teachings of anatta and emptiness, and how they are incomplete unless they are supplemented by the teachings of "no-self" and true self, Buddha nature. Furthermore, the Nirvana Sutra discusses the idea of icchantikas, a group of beings who "have little or no chance of liberation". The idea of icchantikas is discussed in different ways in different versions of the sutra, and the issue is complex, although as Blum writes, the Nirvana Sutra seems "ambiguous about whether icchantikas can attain Buddhahood". A key teaching found in the Nirvana Sutra is the eternal nature of the Buddha. Blum notes that the sutra makes it clear that the Buddha is not subject to the processes of birth and death but is always in a state of immortality.

According to Shimoda and Radich, this theme is central to what is perhaps the earliest textual layer of the Nirvana Sutra. “Now know, good man, that for countless billions of eons the body of the Tathagata has been strong, solid, and indestructible”[19]. Radich also notes that the Nirvana Sutra calls itself by alternative names, including Tathāgataśāśvata-sūtra/Tathāgatanityatva-sūtra, indicating the Tathāgata's eternity. However, his nature is eternal and unchanging. As the Buddha says in the Nirvana Sutra, "sometimes, I see myself entering nirvana in the Jambudvipa of a billion world systems, but ultimately, I do not enter nirvana."

The Nirvana Sutra is also considered the main sutra of both the Tiantai and Huayan schools, the two main doctrinal schools of Chinese Buddhism. The main commentator of the Tiantai school was Zhiyi[20] linking him to the larger ascetic tradition of India even considering this sutra to be the Buddha's final teaching and of equal status with the Lotus Sutra. Because of its status within these doctrinal traditions, it also became important to many Japanese Buddhist schools such as Zen,

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[19] Radich 2015, P 130-131

[20] Zhiyi, the fourth patriarch of the Tiantai Buddhist tradition in China

Nichiren, and Shin Buddhism. This work was cited by important Japanese Buddhist figures such as Dōgen, Nichiren, and Shinran.

Interpretations of the Buddha-nature of the Nirvana Sutra are varied and complex. Karl Brunnholzl argues that there are three main meanings of Buddha-nature in the Nirvana Sutra: (1) an intrinsically pure nature that needs only to be revealed, (2) a seed or potential that can develop into Buddhahood given the right conditions, (3) the idea that the Mahayana path is open to all. The Nirvana Sutra states that Buddhahood is the Buddhahood endowed with the powers and qualities of a Buddha, free from any karmic hindrances or afflictions (klesha), transcending the five aggregates and the twelve links of dependent origination. Thus, the Nirvana Sutra criticizes those who claim that Buddhahood means that all sentient beings are already omnipotent Buddhas and do not need to practice the Bodhisattva path.

Although Buddha-nature is inherent in all beings, there is a group of people known as icchantikas ("extremists" or "dogmatists") who are excluded from Buddha-nature or would find it very difficult to attain. According to scholars such as Blum and Brunnholzl, the exact status and nature of icchantikas in the Nirvana Sutra is difficult to determine, as the subject is discussed in various ways throughout the sutra.

Stephen Hodge[21], article mentions a Bodhisattva appearing in the Mahaparinirvana Sutra as Bodhisattva Kasyapa. This person as the untiring interlocutor who by his questioning draws out of the Buddha a wealth of teachings concerning the permanence of the Buddha, the importance of

[21] Stephen Hodge (2006, P6)

preserving the authentic Vinaya, the need to purge the Saṅgha of miscreant monks, the importance of upholding and promulgating the MPNS, and most of all the tathagatagarbha doctrines.

In his article on Buddhism in Asia, Abira Bhattacharya, in an article titled "The Quest for Shunyata in Mahayana Buddhism," wrote: "The twenty-eighth chapter of the Mahavamsa, considered a Roman work, contains one of the most comprehensive accounts of the distribution of the Buddha's relics." The essentials that the Buddha taught were clear and complete, the Sutra described a panoramic picture at the time of the Buddha's passing away.

In addition to his research articles on the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, in modern times, Dr. Tony Page[22], has shown his reverence and desire to widely propagate the Mahaparinirvana Sutra through a personal Blog with articles and talks explaining the profound meaning through a single topic, which is only talking about the Mahaparinirvana Sutra. He said, almost daily practice with Buddhist scholar and translator Stephen Hodge[23]. In December 2004, Dr. Page created this first website dedicated to the Nirvana Sutra. In 2009, he published a German translation of Stephen Hodge's unpublished English translation of the Tibetan Mahaparinirvana Sutra on this website.

Dr. Tony Page introduces in his Blog in the spirit of the Mahaparinirvana Sutra. English Mystic – Dr. Paul Brunton[24] book The Wisdom of the Overself: "His main teaching is about the hidden reality of the immortal, benevolent, peaceful and immanent 'Overself', as he calls it – the immortal Divine Principle within all beings… He will still be an "I" but one in harmony with the

[22]Tony Page, born in 1957 in London, England
[23] Stephen Hodge, the first Westerner to become a Shingon monk in Japan
[24] Paul Brunton (1898 – 1981)

Overself – a descriptive name that must be retained and not eliminated" So do not in your writings attack the ego as so many have done but raise it to its highest potential.

Zen Master Sokei-an was one of the first Japanese Zen masters to teach Zen in America. "When your mind is purified, the outside no longer exists and you enter the world of the pure mind, of the soul alone. Your steps draw near to the great cosmic mind, and you enter. Do not be afraid. You will not lose your physical body but will return and look at your physical body and realize that this body is not your own. When you experience this in meditation, it is the first step of realization in Buddhism."[25]. The Mahaparinirvana Sutra instructs us to purify our heart of the kleshas (mental and moral negativities) and to "enter this Self" of the Buddha – the Buddha-dhatu. Sokei-An indicates something similar.

The author believes that interest in the Mahaparinirvana Sutra revolves around these themes:

In addition to affirming the Buddha nature in each sentient being as in the Lotus Sutra, in the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the Buddha affirms that the Dharma body of the Buddha is eternal, unchanging, and never destroyed. The Buddha nature is constant, happy, self, and pure. The Buddha manifests in this world because of his vow to save sentient beings. All are manifestations. Birth, aging, sickness, and death are the four great elements of the Buddha's body, just like all sentient beings, but sentient beings suffer, while the Buddha does not suffer, because he is an enlightened being. The Buddha left behind teachings as the result of his true practice and realization in many lifetimes, of which this is the last. The enlightenment that the Buddha has achieved can be attained by all sentient beings, so before leaving the world, the Buddha answered

[25] Sokei-an, The Zen Eye, "Meditation", page 57

all doubts. The Bodhisattvas are those who have developed the mind of Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi, saving sentient beings and saving themselves. The Bodhisattvas have practiced with him for many lifetimes, clearly understanding the teachings, so the Buddha passed on this Dharma treasure to the Bodhisattvas, devas, and humans to preserve and propagate. The sutras are Dharma treasures, so whoever receives, recites, preaches, widely propagates, and preserves them will have much merit, and is on the path to Buddhahood.

In this next section, the project will highlight significant commentaries by contemporary masters of the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra to show the continuing importance and continued praxis of these two sutras.

Tibetan masters and scholars have written extensively on Buddha nature. In his article "The Clear Light Nature of the Mind," an oral teaching by Geshe Sonam Rinchen, it is written, "The nature of our mind is not affected by the temporary stains that exist, such as disturbing emotions. The basic nature, which is the emptiness of our mind of these stains, is the innate permanent tendency. Our mind is like a cloudy sky, but clouds are not an intrinsic part of the sky, just as pollutants are not intrinsic to water, and alloys are not an intrinsic part of gold. The nature of the mind is not affected by these temporary stains but is clear and conscious. Pollutants do not affect the true nature of water. Likewise, the stains in the mind are not related to the clear and conscious nature of the mind. That clarity is the natural state. When the seed for the mind has been activated through listening to and thinking about the teachings, it is the tendency to develop.

The fundamental nature of the mind is indistinguishable from the fundamental nature of the mind of a sentient being with an enlightened being. Although the mind is affected by temporary stains by disturbing emotions. In meditative equilibrium, the reality of the mind is seen, but there

is a disruption, the ultimate clear nature of the mind can be obscured, until enlightenment is achieved. That ultimate realm is the nature of the Tathagata. All sentient beings have the tendency to enlightenment.

Yongey Mingyur wrote in his article "Buddha Nature: You Are Perfect Just as You Are"[26] The real power of meditation is not in the method. It is in changing our perspective. Perspective is not a technique. It is how we see ourselves and how we relate to our thoughts and emotions. Without changing perspective, even the most powerful meditation techniques only reinforce old patterns and habits. The core view of Buddha nature is both profound and simple: You are perfect, exactly as you are, right now.

Yongey recounts his experience of practicing meditation with the goal of becoming a person free of fear and anxiety, but it did not bring the desired results. Instead of resisting his fears and pushing away fearful thoughts and anxious expectations, he let them in, not focusing on them, not ignoring them, and allowing himself to simply "be." Whatever it is, let it come and go without following it, including the motivation to "meditate." Buddha nature is our true nature, our inherent perfection. Everyone has a profound clarity, an essential quality of Buddha nature, which is wisdom. Buddha nature is not something we do, but something we need to realize, that is the key. When this realization reaches familiarity, we will realize that we will never be more perfect than we are now, right now.

Gyatrul Rinpoche, a renowned modern Tibetan master of the Nyingma school, clearly and concisely presented the Tibetan Buddhist view of Buddha nature in his article "Proof of Our Buddha Nature," reminding us that all sentient beings have Buddha nature, and that realizing our

[26] Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche, Published on Lion's Roar, 2019/11/08

Buddha nature depends on deep learning. It is necessary to “chew” what we have learned and really take it to heart: “If you don’t know your Buddha nature, learn about it! Don’t just complain that you don’t understand or say it’s too difficult. How can you see it? How can you realize it? By learning.”

All Buddhas say that all sentient beings have Buddha nature. It is because of Buddha nature that enlightenment can happen. Because Buddha nature is present in us. All Buddhas are here and everywhere. Because sentient beings have Buddha nature, they can become Buddhas. It is called 'nature' because it is already there, already in your hands, in your heart, in your mind. Already in your own nature. No one can steal it from you, but you need to realize it, by studying. But the point is that you have gone deeply into whatever you have received, contemplated, so that you can understand what you have heard or read, go deeper into the meaning, and the understanding will become more and more solid. Then, it is to practice purely, truly. And really benefit the mind, benefit everything from body, speech and mind, for yourself and others. That is, you begin to realize your Buddha nature. That nature is the enlightened mind. Only because of Buddha nature will we be able to be enlightened, to be liberated from all the suffering of samsara.

The nature of good and evil, are all the nature of the mind, are Buddha nature. Their nature is the same, neither blocking nor making it grow, is believing that you have Buddha nature. When there is strong faith and pure compassion, that is the result of Buddha nature, the result of wisdom. When you start practicing, you start to have small sprouts from the root of Buddha nature, from which the Buddha tree is growing, the Buddha nature is blooming, the leaves, the branches and the fruits. All are not separate but are one, inseparable.

Not being virtuous is not acting like a Buddha, it is ignorance, which leads to all suffering, while virtue brings you to the same path as all enlightened masters, to liberation. Not being virtuous is not acting like a Buddha, which is ignorance, which leads to all suffering, while virtue takes you to the same path as all enlightened masters, to liberation. The enlightened nature of the Buddhas is the same as yourself and all sentient beings.

Tsoknyi Rinpoche[27] "This is my mind, clear and empty": The energy of meditation is like a kind of spark that makes the mind bright and intense in the body, mind, and heart itself, lighting up the life of all living beings. In Buddhist teachings, this is called Buddha nature, understood as a state of "bliss," which is difficult to describe, because it is limitless. The basis and nature of human beings is also the basis of all phenomena, that there is some kind of void at the center of the being and is described as emptiness. Emptiness is a rough translation of the Sanskrit term shunyata and the Tibetan term tongpa-nyi. The basic meaning of the word shunya is "zero," from the Tibetan word tongpa meaning "empty", not in the sense of a vacuum or void, but in the sense of a ground of experience that is beyond our ability to perceive with our senses and or grasp in a nice, neat concept. A deeper understanding of the word might be "unthinkable" or "unnameable." The actual teachings on emptiness imply an infinite open space that allows anything to appear, change, disappear, and reappear.

Tsoknyi Rinpoche gives a little practice for experiencing emptiness, simply not chasing, not holding on, not clinging to unpleasant things. Just observe the thoughts and emotions that come and go and are replaced by other thoughts and emotions. Recognize everything that passes through your awareness as it is. Continue to do so, and they will gain the true flavor of emptiness. And

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[27] Tsoknyi Rinpoche, with Eric Swanson, *Open Heart, Open Mind* © 2012. 2012/03/20

eventually we will find ourselves able to handle all situations that we once found painful, scary or upsetting. There is the discovery of a sense of confidence that does not come from arrogance or pride. And the realization that we are always protected, always safe and always at home. This basic or natural awareness is just a potential.

In the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, translated by Venerable Thich Tri Tinh, paraphrased by Venerable Thich Huyen Chau[28]: Buddha nature exists in all living beings just like Buddha, no different, not born, not destroyed, not defiled, not pure, not increasing, not decreasing, but we keep struggling to find a way to make a living with much suffering. The Buddha nature of living beings is not damaged, not pulled, not caught, not tied, not bound etc. So where is the Buddha nature of living beings? Using emptiness as a concept to describe Buddha nature. Buddha nature is as empty as emptiness. In our body there are many spaces of emptiness, but we do not see them. If there were no emptiness in the body, the body would be like a frozen block, unable to lie down, sit, walk, and unable to live and grow. Because all living beings have emptiness, there are no obstacles, but all do not see themselves as having this emptiness. The Buddha said that all living beings have the realm of emptiness. The realm of emptiness is called emptiness. The Bodhisattvas of the Ten Stages see a part of it but do not see it completely, like seeing only a few treasures, while the Buddhas see everything.

Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche[29] writes: Studying the Buddha's teachings we truly understand that our basic nature is already whole, pure and complete both inside and out. True happiness lies within, our level of satisfaction does not depend on the salary, the quality of our relationships or

[28] Thich Huyen Chau, Lion's Roar Bodhisattva, lecture 3/9/2025
[29] Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche, Lasting Happiness, 2012/01/19

the number of pleasurable experiences we can have from things that are fleeting and changing in nature from the outside. With our own experience, love, compassion and wisdom are always manifesting. The qualities of enlightenment are truly present, right now. We want to be happy and free from suffering, but often do things that bring us the opposite result. Just stop to realize what is always right in front of us.

Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche[30]To overcome the main obstacles that a Bodhisattva faces, Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche says, we must realize that all sentient beings are originally pure. Like a window that has been wiped clean of dirt and labeled a clean window. The original state of the window has never been stained by the extremes of dirt or cleanliness. If we do not know that Buddha nature resides in every sentient being, then when practicing the Bodhisattva path, we do not respect sentient beings and benefit all of them. Everyone has Buddha nature. It will not change. No one, no guru, no Buddha can bring it in. The Buddha nature is inherently pure and without any complicated phenomena from the beginning. The emotions of the five aggregates are like clouds, temporary, random. The clouds are never the sky. Karma is really like a dream. In a dream, you can experience all kinds of ecstasy, but it is just a dream. The five aggregates are like an illusion, because the closer you get to them, the more useless or meaningless they become.

The Buddha nature is within us and in all beings, all are the same, so we do not look down on the poor, we are not arrogant, and we do not feel inferior when we see a superior being or someone who has achieved a lot. We are not better or worse than Shakyamuni Buddha or any of the thousand Buddhas.

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[30] Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche, Immaculate from the Beginning,2008/12/01

Melissa Myozen Black[31]: Greed, anger, and ignorance are the three poisons that torment humans from birth. Mahayana Buddhist teachings offer a different and more hopeful perspective on our basic nature, that we are already enlightened beings, and that negativity obscures our true nature as impermanent and temporary. The word "buddha" comes from the Sanskrit word for "awakened." In the dualistic view, we strive to transform evil into good; counteract greed, anger, and ignorance with generosity, kindness, and insight. But in the non-dualistic view of Mahayana, it is accepting of everything that arises, good and bad, right and wrong. The enlightened nature that pervades the universe is called buddha nature. Nothing in the universe is outside of this awakened nature. Buddha nature is the foundation of all life. It is neither good nor bad, although it is not neutral. It has the flavor of compassion and insight and promises liberation from the mind, which creates division and stubbornly clings to a separate self.

The negativities that plague human life and society are only temporary obscurations of the Buddha nature, not a permanent part of the human being. The non-dual, enlightened nature is described as unborn, free from categories, free from clinging, and free from the self. It is always present, cannot be opposed or achieved, and is known by the enlightened mind. Buddha nature is not limited to humans.

Nothing in the universe is outside this enlightened nature. Sentient and insentient beings all have Buddha nature; everything manifests the truth of enlightenment. Animals and plants, bricks and walls, trees and stars all manifest Buddha nature. For the mind, which is constantly generating dualistic thoughts and views, this is difficult to understand. But once seen, it is truly miraculous and profound. To realize the nature of awakening, practice meditation. Whenever

[31] Melissa Myozen Black, Everything is Buddha Nature,2018/11/28

anything arises in awareness, whether a thought, feeling, or sensory perception, do not run after it, do not resist it, or try to transform it. There is nothing to do and nowhere to go. There is nothing to try to find, interfere with, or eliminate. This practice is described as "thoughtless thinking," which will transform itself into clarity, feeling the great energy of bodhicitta. Everything is Buddha nature.

Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche[32]: According to Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche's research, the understanding of emptiness varies greatly among the various schools of thought. It should be noted that at this time, many of the great Kagyü and Nyingma masters did not come to the same conclusion as the Shentongpas about the concept of Buddha nature. However, the concept of Buddha nature itself does not imply that the mind has any inherent nature. In fact, many of the great Kagyü and Nyingma masters interpreted Buddha nature to mean that the mind is free from both defilements and any kind of inherent existence. The Buddha nature is obscured by those defilements, which originate from primordial ignorance. Their removal leads to the realization of Buddha nature, and the realization of Buddha nature is the attainment of true freedom or liberation.

Mindrollingtsün Khandro[33] teaches that, by bringing body and mind together, and by making a sincere dedication to the path of meditation and practice, one strives to make this life a true cause for the happiness of all beings. According to him, there is "the simplicity of what the Buddha taught," that Buddha nature is the wisdom essence of all Dharma teachings. Absolute truth cannot be expressed in any concept. Therefore, the Buddhist philosophical approach cannot say what truth is; it can only say what truth is not. This is expressed in the Buddha's first sermon: the

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[32] Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche, Emptiness–Buddha Nature,2003/09/01
[33] Mindrolling Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche, On Buddha Nature—and What It Is Not, Amsterdam, June 19, 2008

Dharmacakraprabha Sutta. Within each human being there is the natural potential to realize that you are completely and inseparably connected to your own intrinsic wisdom nature. It is the basic wisdom mind that distinguishes what is good for us and what is harmful to us. The inner awareness tells us that we are at the edge of the roof and should not go any further; or knows when to stop holding the match when lighting a candle. This inner potential is “Buddha nature”. Human beings are endowed with so much potential, but destroy it, instead of using it properly. That is ignorance. Not understanding the law of cause and effect, planting lemons and praying for mangoes is ineffective. Wishing for happiness without sowing the seeds of happiness and doing the opposite, creates bad karma.

Conclusion

The Buddha's teachings in the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, affirm that all sentient beings have Buddha-nature, eternal and inherent, is the truth that practitioners on the journey of cultivation, through the middle path, discover Buddha-nature within themselves. Through his own experience, the Buddha has shown that there is only one path to enlightenment, to completely end all suffering and sorrow, and to attain eternal happiness in the present moment. Like the great monks and practitioners from East to West, they have studied, contemplated, experienced and shared. Depending on each person's position, all affirm the unimaginable value of the truth that the Enlightened One wants to convey. As a Buddhist, studying the Sutras is to absorb the Buddha's teachings to have the right method of practice. Identifying each step as a step towards the destination, at the same time contributing to preserving the lifeblood of the Buddha's teachings to be passed on forever.

3- The Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra

The Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra were systematized and edited by the Patriarchs based on the content of the Buddha's teachings in the last eight years before he entered Nirvana. These are two massive sutras in the Mahayana sutra system, containing immeasurable meanings, profound and secret meanings that cannot be clearly expressed to the listener in words, so the Buddha used examples to describe and help the listener recognize the profound meaning of those teachings, that is, using events to explain principles. Both Mahayana sutras were preached by the Buddha to his disciples and many others who wanted to hear his teachings on his journey of propagating the Dharma and saving sentient beings.

The Lotus Sutra first appeared about 500 years after the Buddha's death. The Tripitaka master Nagarjuna mentioned the Lotus Sutra in his work Mahaprajnaparamita Sastra. The Mahaparinirvana Sutra was brought to China by a great monk from Central India, Sa. Dharmakṣema, around the 5th century, and was translated into Chinese by a great monk from Central India, Sa. Dharmakṣema. The sutras were widely circulated in Eastern countries and had a great influence on many Mahayana sects and in turn were also spread and translated by countries in the Western world. In Vietnam, there are many eminent monks and researchers who translated from the Chinese version, comparing it with the original Sanskrit and Pali versions such as Venerable Thich Tri Tinh, Venerable Tue Sy, Venerable Thich Minh Chau, laymen, researchers Thieu Chuu, Doan Trung Con, Nguyen Minh Tien, Nguyen Minh Hien. Venerable Thich Tri Tinh translated the entire set of both sutras from the Sanskrit version of Tripitaka Master Kumarajiva and circulated widely. Most translations into European languages originated from Kumārajīva's Chinese translation, starting with the Italian translation by Carlo Puini in 1873. Translation (from

Pali) into English by T.W. Rhys-David (1881, 1910); The German research work of E. Waldschmidt from 1944 to 1951; The research work of French Buddhist scholar André Bareau from 1970 to 1975. Most translators also compared the Pali and Sanskrit versions.

In the framework of my thesis, in addition to referring to the translations of many sutras and lectures, I used the complete translation of both sutras by the same author, Venerable Thich Tri Tinh, translated from the Chinese version by Kumarajiva; Lectures on both sutras by Venerable Thich Tu Thong, and the translation of the Mahaparinirvana Sutra by layman Nguyen Minh Tien, translated from the Chinese version by Sa. Dharmakṣema, to compare the ideas of these two sutras.

Chapter III- The Buddha's teachings in the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra

1- Structure and content of the Lotus Sutra

The Lotus Sutra is a compilation of the Buddha's teachings on the Vulture Peak (Gṛdhrakūṭa) mountain in the final stage of his career of spreading the teachings of sentient beings, before entering Parinivarna (Skt. Parinivarna). The sutra consists of seven volumes, divided into twenty-eight chapters. In addition to the long-line section, some chapters also have verses.

1.1- Chapter 1 is called the first "preface" chapter. This chapter describes the scene of the sermon, on Vulture Peak Mountain, Rajagriha city. There are full members from all realms attending: Arhat Bhikshus, learners and non-learners, Bhikshunis, Bodhisattvas, Devas of the heavens, Dragons, Ghosts, Asuras. After preaching the Infinite Meaning Sutra (Skt. Ananta Nirdeśa Sūtra), Shakyamuni Buddha entered into great samadhi, causing many transcendent phenomena to appear, throughout the Buddha realms six tones resounded[34]. All these auspicious signs signaled that the Buddha was about to preach the Lotus Sutra, just like the Buddhas of the past who preached the Lotus Sutra, which Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva had witnessed[35]. Bodhisattva Śrīgarbha preached the Lotus Sutra for many lifetimes, and now he is Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.

1.2- Chapter 2. Expedient means (Upāya-kauśalya): The Buddha told Sāriputra that the Buddha’s knowledge was profound and wonderful, “only Buddha and Buddha can understand the

[34] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.24
[35] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.38

true nature of all dharmas”[36]. Because the Dharma is difficult to understand, it is easy to have doubts. Venerable Sāriputra, on behalf of all four groups, three times requested to hear the Dharma. At that time, there were 5,000 people who, out of arrogance, did not want to listen. The Buddha told the remaining people that they were “purely pure”[37]. The Buddha emerged from his meditation and taught the One Vehicle (Ekayana): there is only one Buddha vehicle, however, due to the different capacities of living beings, the Buddhas must use expedient means to divide the Buddha vehicle into the Three Vehicles (Triyāna) to bring all living beings to liberation. The World-Honored One Buddhas have only one cause to appear in this world, which is to "bring the Buddha's Knowledge and Wisdom to enlighten sentient beings".

1.3- Chapter 3. For example: The Tathagata prophesied (Skt. Vyākarana) that Sāriputra would become a Buddha in the future; The Buddha used the story of "the house is on fire" to help wise people understand the meaning and end their doubts: a rich man (Buddha) had three children (living beings) happily playing in a burning house (three realms) without knowing it. The rich man tried his best to call his children but the children did not listen, so he devised a means[38] saying that he had toys: a goat cart (Sravaka vehicle), a deer cart (Pratyekabuddha vehicle), a buffalo cart (Bodhisattva vehicle); the children listened and immediately ran out of the burning house. The father, with immeasurable wealth, without bias, equally gave all his children a buffalo cart, the most precious type of cart. “The Tathagatas use expedient means in the one Buddha vehicle to

[36] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.54
[37] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.65
[38] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.115

differentiate and speak of the three vehicles”[39], to liberate all, which is called Mahayana. The actions of the rich man are not false.

1.4- Chapter 4. Faith and understanding: The great disciples Mahakasyapa (Skt. Mahākaśyapa), Subhuti (Skt. Subhūti), Mahamaudgalyāyāna (Skt. Mahāmaudgalyāyāna), and Mahakasyapa (Skt. Mahākātyāyana) after hearing the Buddha's prophecy for Venerable Sāriputra, were deeply moved to hear the rare Dharma, and the Sravakas also attained Buddhahood, so they told the parable of the "Poor Boy" to describe the poor lost son whose father was a rich man. The old father thought of a plan to persuade the son to come back and do dirty work (the first step to the path of liberation) and he happily agreed. However, the son sought joy in poverty and contentment with a lowly will (he thought that he had attained the fruit of Arhat was enough, loving the Hinayana Dharma (Thich Tri Tinh, P.165). Gradually, the son's will also become more generous (from Hinayana to Mahayana mind) and the father saw that and was happy to entrust his entire fortune (Buddhism) to his son.

1.5- Chapter 5. The Parable of Medicinal Herbs: This chapter is related to chapter 4. The Buddha gave the third parable so that his disciples could understand clearly about the Buddha vehicle: The Buddha gave the Dharma to show equality like rain falling on all species, without distinction. Although it is the same rain (Buddha vehicle), different seeds (the nature of sentient beings) will grow into a forest with all kinds of trees, big and small, but with different absorptions, they grow, bloom and bear fruit (Thich Tri Tinh, P.190).

[39] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.125

1.6- Chapter 6. Bestowal of Prophecy: Buddha Sakyamuni prophesied that Mahakasyapa, Mahamaudgalyayana, Subhuti, and Kasyapa would attain the Supreme, Perfect Enlightenment. All of them would attain Buddhahood with ten titles.

1.7- Chapter 7. A Past Buddha and The Parable of the Illusory City: Buddha Sakyamuni talked about the past Buddha Mahābhijñājñānābhibh. He had 16 sons, who, after hearing that their father had attained Bodhi, became novices; The novice monks heard the Lotus Sutra and when the Buddha Maha-Prajnaparamita entered great samadhi, he preached the Lotus Sutra, helping sentient beings in the three realms and ten directions to attain enlightenment. The sixteen novice monks later attained Buddhahood, such as Amitabha Buddha in the Land of Peace (Skt. Sukhāvatī), Akṣobhya Buddha in the Land of Wonderful Joy (Skt. Abhirati), Sakyamuni Buddha in the Saha world (Skt. Saha), et. All the above Buddhas relied on the capacities of sentient beings to preach the Dharma and those Dharmas all led to the Buddha vehicle. The Parable of the Illusory City tells of a teacher who led people to find a treasure. Knowing that the long and arduous path (the path of practice) would cause many people to lose heart (to turn back from the Buddha vehicle), he immediately used his expedient power to transform into a city for people to temporarily stop and rest (the Nirvana of Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas), but they thought they had been saved. The Master immediately transformed himself and told them that: "It is only the expedient power of the Tathagata, in the one Buddha vehicle, it is distinguished and said as three"[40].

1.8- Chapter 8. The Five Hundred Disciples Receive Prophecies: The Buddha gave prophecies to Pūrna Maitrāyanīputra, Kaundinya and five hundred disciples to become Arhats. They told the parable of the Jewel in the Shirt: a man went to his close friend's house and drank

[40] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.253

alcohol and fell asleep. When his friend had urgent official business and had to leave, he immediately put the jewel (Buddha nature) in the drunkard's shirt to help his friend leave suffering (attain Buddhahood). The Buddha's disciples, like this drunkard (covered by ignorance), did not know that the Buddha had taught them to become Omniscient, but they were satisfied with a lowly position[41].

1.9- Chapter 9. Prophecies for the Learners and Adepts: The Buddha predicted that the learners such as Ananda and Rahula would become Buddhas, and at the same time predicted that two thousand Learners and Adepts would all attain the Unsurpassed Fruit.

1.10- Chapter 10. The Dharma Teacher: The Buddha told the Medicine King Bodhisattva (Bhaiṣajyarāja) that the Lotus Sutra is the secret treasury of the Buddhas[42], therefore, whoever reads, recites, preaches (the Dharma Teacher - Dharmabanaka), listens, copies, and respectfully worships as a Buddha, and has "a single thought of joy" will be predicted by the World-Honored One to attain the Unsurpassed, Correct, and Equal Enlightenment. Those who widely preach the Lotus Sutra for the sake of the four groups must enter the Tathagata's house, wear the Tathagata's robe, and sit on the Tathagata's throne. They are messengers who do the Tathagata's work.

1.11- Chapter 11. The Emergence of the Jeweled Stupa: When Shakyamuni Buddha was preaching the Dharma, the stupa of Prabhūtaratna Buddha appeared from the ground, and from the stupa a voice rang out, "Excellent! Excellent! to praise Shakyamuni Buddha's preaching of the

[41] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.285
[42] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.305

Lotus Sutra as the true words". Shakyamuni Buddha used his right hand to open the stupa door so that all could see Prabhūtaratna Buddha, and he shared half of the seat in the Lion Throne.

1.12- Chapter 12. Devadatta: Shakyamuni Buddha preached to the four assemblies about the relationship between him and Devadatta. In his previous life, the sage Devadatta was a good friend who taught the Lotus Sutra to the king (the previous life of Shakyamuni Buddha), helping the king attain Buddhahood in the present. In the Dharma assembly, he prophesied that Devadatta would become a Buddha in the future. Manjushri taught the Lotus Sutra, among those listening to the sutra was an 8-year-old dragon girl, the daughter of Dragon King Sāgara, who came and offered a precious pearl to Shakyamuni Buddha. In response to Venerable Sāriputta's question about the ability of a woman to attain enlightenment, the Dragon Girl immediately transformed into a man and attained the state of Samyak Sambodhi, and propagated the Dharma to sentient beings.

1.13- Chapter 13. Upholding: The Bodhisattvas and Great Bodhisattvas and their retinues vowed before the Buddha to uphold, recite, and preach the Lotus Sutra. The Buddha prophesied that the bhikkhunis Gautamī, Yaśodharā, and other bhikkhunis would attain the state of Samyak Sambodhi.

1.14- Chapter 14. Peaceful Practices: The Practice of Peace and Joy presents four methods for correctly receiving and preaching the Lotus Sutra: (1) abiding in the Practice of Action, and in the Practice of Being Close; (2) Observing “All dharmas are not as they really are”; (3) Abiding in the practice of peace and joy; (4) When the Dharma is about to perish, generating a great

compassionate mind, speaking the Dharma without error, causing living beings to reach the level of "All-knowing"[43].

1.15- Chapter 15. The Brave Emergence from the Earth: When the great Bodhisattvas (Mahasattvas) from other directions requested Shakyamuni Buddha to let them stay in the Saha world to propagate and preserve the Lotus Sutra after his death. The Buddha refused because the Saha world has countless Bodhisattvas who are ready to propagate the Lotus Sutra on his behalf. The Tathagata told that he had taught them since countless past lives, they were eager for the Buddha's Dharma and sought the unsurpassed wisdom.

1.16- Chapter 16. The Life Span of Tathagatha: The Buddha said that in fact he was born, attained Buddhahood and passed away countless eons ago, and is currently in the same process. The Tathagata's lifespan is immeasurable, eternal, and never ends[44]. The Buddha today said that he would enter nirvana, which is a means to teach sentient beings not to be negligent and lazy. The Buddha compared himself to a good doctor. It is difficult to meet Buddhas in this world.

1.17- Chapter 17. Distinguishing merits: After the Buddha preached about the Tathagata's lifespan, countless sentient beings attained enlightenment with many different levels, all of whom developed the mind of Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi. Those who received, preserved, and expounded the Lotus Sutra received immeasurable merits.

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[43] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.382
[44] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.414

1.18- Chapter 18. Merit of Rejoicing: Those who hear the Lotus Sutra and are filled with joy and expound it according to their ability, gradually turning until the 50th person will receive immeasurable and boundless merit that is incomparable.

1.19- Chapter 19. Merit of Dharma Teacher: The Buddha told Bodhisattva Sadāparibhūta that those who read, recite, explain, and transcribe the Lotus Sutra will receive eight hundred merits in the eyes, nose, and body; one thousand two hundred merits in the ears, tongue, and mind[45], causing all six senses to be pure. Those who explain and recite the Lotus Sutra are Dharma teachers and will receive immeasurable merits.

1.20- Chapter 20. Sadāparibhūta Bodhisattva: Bodhisattva Sadāparibhūta is a previous life of Buddha Shakyamuni. He always respectfully bowed to anyone, clasping his hands and saying: "I respect you very much and dare not be disrespectful. Why? Because you all practice the Bodhisattva path and will become Buddhas."[46]. He was chased away, criticized, scolded, and despised by arrogant monks. When he was about to die, Bodhisattva Sadāparibhūta heard the Lotus Sutra, which made his six senses pure, his lifelong, his heart fearless, and his preaching of the Lotus Sutra won the trust of everyone, so he saved many people and quickly attained Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi.

1.21- Chapter 21. Tathagata's supernatural powers**:** Shakyamuni Buddha manifested supernatural powers in the form of a long, wide tongue emitting countless rays of light that

[45] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.461
[46] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.484

illuminated all the lands in the ten directions. Due to this supernatural power, all the lands gathered in the Saha world to listen to the Buddha preach the Mahayana Lotus Sutra.

1.22- Chapter 22. Entrustment: The Buddha manifested great supernatural powers and rubbed the heads of the Bodhisattvas three times and spoke words of last will to the Bodhisattvas to propagate the Lotus Sutra so that sentient beings could gain the Buddha's wisdom. This was a way to repay the Buddhas[47].

1.23- Chapter 23. The Life of Medicine King Bodhisattva: The previous life of Medicine King Bodhisattva (Bhaiṣajyarāja) was Bodhisattva Sarvarūpasaṃdarśana, who once offered the Buddha Candrasūryavimalaprabhāsaśrī and the Lotus Sutra by burning his body. The Lotus Sutra is the best of all sutras, "This sutra is the medicine for the sick in the world of Jambudvipa"[48].

1.24- Chapter 24. The Bodhisattva Gadgadasvara: Bodhisattva Wonderful Voice in the country from a distant world uses the power of Samadhi on the precious lotus throne, comes to the Saha world to bow and make offerings to Shakyamuni Buddha and to meet the Great Bodhisattvas. Bodhisattva Wonderful sound often manifests himself to speak the Lotus Sutra and rescues sentient beings in the Saha world. The Samadhi of Bodhisattva Wonderful Sound is called “Manifesting All Forms”[49].

1.25- Chapter 25. Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara Universal Gate: "Universal Gate" means a wide, non-discriminating door; sentient beings pass through this door to reach the shore of enlightenment. This chapter describes the 33 incarnations of Bodhisattva suitable to the

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[47] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.504
[48] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.521
[49] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.542

attainments of sentient beings in the worlds to preach the Dharma to save them. In the Saha world, he is called "Giving Fearlessness"[50].

1.26- Chapter 26. Dharani: Bodhisattva Medicine King recited the Dharani[51]of countless Buddhas to protect sentient beings who recite the Lotus Sutra. The Bodhisattvas, the Heavenly Kings, and female Rakshasas also recited the mantra to support those who preach and uphold the Lotus Sutra.

1.27- Chapter 27. King Wonderful Adornment's Original Story. Bodhisattvas Medicine King and Medicine Superior who were the princes of King Wonderful Adornment, practicing the virtues and samadhis of Bodhisattvas, possessing great supernatural powers. The two princes were people who admired Buddhism, they persuaded the king to listen to the Buddha preach the Lotus Sutra. The two princes immediately displayed supernatural powers, causing the king to believe, understand, and love Buddhism[52]. The Buddha preached the Dharma to the king and prophesied that the king would become a Buddha.

1.28- Chapter 28. Universal Worthy Bodhisattva's encouragement: The Buddha said that after the Buddha's death, people would achieve four dharmas: 1. be protected by the Buddhas. 2. Plant the roots of merit. 3. Enter right concentration. 4. Develop the heart to save all living beings. Bodhisattva Samantabhadra vowed to ride a white elephant with six tusks, manifest supernatural powers, and give the Dharani mantra[53] to protect and support those who practice, recite, and

[50] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.558
[51] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.560
[52] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.572
[53] Thich Tri Tinh, Lotus Sutra, P.582

preserve the Lotus Sutra in the present and the future. Those are those who are practicing Samantabhadra's conduct.

2- Structure and content of the Mahaparinirvana Sutra

The Mahaparinirvana Sutra is a compilation of the Buddha's teachings at the Sala-Two-Tree Forest in Kusinara city at the time the Buddha was about to enter Nirvana (sa. Parinivarna). The sutra consists of twenty-nine chapters. In addition to the long-line section, some chapters also have verses.

2.1- The first preface chapter. This chapter describes the scene on the early morning of the fifteenth day of the second month, the day the Buddha was about to enter Nirvana. Anyone who has any doubts about the teachings, please come and ask, the Tathagata will answer all. The Buddha emitted light that shone everywhere, the great earth, mountains and seas shook. All the worlds, ten directions, gathered and lamented: "the world is empty", asking the Tathagata to stay in the world[54]. They all wished to offer the Buddha their last meal, but the Buddha did not promise to accept it and said, “it was not the right time”.

2.2- Chapter 2. On Cunda. Cunda was an Upasaka, a group of workers who came to bow to the Buddha and wished the Buddha to “accept the last offering so that countless sentient beings could be saved”. The Buddha taught Sundara: “There are two kinds of offerings, with the same result, one is to receive and immediately attain Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi, the other is to enter Nirvana immediately after receiving it. Today, the Tathagata accepts your last offering and gives

[54] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.31

you the full alms of Paramita”[55]. Bodhisattva Manjushri preached that the Tathagata is eternal, the Dharma that does not change, the Dharma that is unconditioned.

2.3- Chapter 3. Lamentation. The great earth shook in six ways, the gods and the four groups of people mourned and cried because they had not yet escaped suffering, but the Buddha had abandoned them. The Buddha taught that if there was any doubt in the Dharma, they should ask. After speaking the nectar Dharma, the Buddha entered Nirvana. The Buddha Dharma is a good medicine to cure the disease of afflictions. Contemplating the Dharmas of impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and non-self is not the "true meaning". Because of the arising of a deluded mind, afflictions, and ignorance, one does not understand the true meaning: "Self" is the true meaning of "Buddha", "Permanence" is the true meaning of "Dharma Body", "Happiness" is the true meaning of "Nirvana", "Pure" is the true meaning of "Dharma"[56]. “All the unsurpassed Dharma of the Buddha, the Tathagata entrusted to Maha Kassapa, Ma Ha Kassapa will be the place of complete guidance for you”[57].

2.4- Chapter 4. Longevity. The Bhikkhus compared themselves to an old man about to die who accepts to keep gold from a person who has gone far away and cannot live long enough to preserve it. The Buddha said that this is why he entrusted the Mahayana Dharma to the Bodhisattvas[58]. A Bodhisattva who wants to live long must protect all living beings as his own children and teach them to practice good dharma. A bhikshu who upholds the precepts fully protects the true dharma. At the same time, he punishes those who break the precepts and slander

[55] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.42
[56] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.74
[57] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.76
[58] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.85

the true dharma. The Tathagata's life is the longest of all. It is like the eight great rivers and the small rivers (the lifespan of all) flowing into the great ocean (the lifespan of the Tathagata). The Tathagata's life is immeasurable, the foremost[59]. The Tathagata is not a mixed body, but manifests to save living beings, and manifests to abandon the body and enter Nirvana.

2.5- Chapter 5. On the Adamantine Body. The Tathagata's body is not like the body of ordinary people, but is eternal, indestructible, a diamond body, the Dharma body, equal like space, accomplishing immeasurable merits to save sentient beings. The Buddha obtained the Diamond Body by protecting the Dharma. A monk who violates the four serious precepts is not a Sramanas, not a Sakya's son[60].

2.6- Chapter 6. The Virtue of the Name. The Mahaparinirvana Sutra is the place of practice of countless Buddhas. All the words, whether upper, middle, or lower, are good, the meaning is profound, full of pure conduct, containing profound and secret wonderful Dharma, helping living beings to transcend the stream of defilements in the three realms, and is the foremost of the Samadhi Sutras. The Sutra has all eight flavors: eternal, constant, peaceful, cool, ageless, deathless, undefiled, and joyful, so it is called "Mahaparinirvana"[61].

2.7- Chapter 7. The Four Aspects. The Great Bodhisattva who distinguishes and explains the Great Nirvana has four meanings: one is self-correction, two is correcting others, three is being good at answering questions, four is skillfully understanding the meaning of causes and conditions. All four of these meanings are the same as Great Nirvana. When the disciples have enough

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[59] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.97
[60] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.115
[61] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.119

wisdom, the Tathagata teaches them the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutras[62], which is the difference between the Sravakas, Pratyekabuddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas; between conditioned and unconditioned. The Tathagata is called having cured the illnesses of living beings, and having attained peace and happiness, which is called Great Nirvana, the true Liberation.

2.8- Chapter 8. The Four Dependables. There are four types of people who uphold, establish, and remember the Dharma to benefit and serve as a support for the world, including: 1- Those who transcend the world and have enough afflictions, are ordinary people but keep the precepts, understand the Buddha's words, and preach them. 2- Srotapanna and Sakadagami. 3- Anagami. 4- Arhat. The four types of people above are the great generals of the Supreme Mahayana Dharma[63]. As a Bhiksu, one must rely on four things: Rely on the Dharma, not on people; Rely on the meaning, not on words; Rely on wisdom, not on consciousness; Rely on the sutras with definitive meaning, not on sutras without definitive meaning. Ultimate meaning is to understand all the Mahayana sutras.

2.9- Chapter 9. Wrong and Right. Relying on the four types of people above is to counter the four types of demons, it is necessary to clearly distinguish between the Buddha's words and the demon's words. Demons have bodies with outflows, break precepts, damage the Dharma, and do not recognize the Tathagata's manifestation to teach and save living beings. Whoever hears and believes in those words is a relative of the demon. Whoever follows the Buddha's teachings is a Bodhisattva, believes in the Mahayana sutras, believes in cause and effect, and preaches that all

[62] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.149
[63] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.193

living beings have Buddha nature, eliminate countless afflictions, and become Supremely Enlightened, except for the icchantikas.

2.10- Chapter 10. The Four Noble Truths. The Four Noble Truths in the Mahaparinirvana Sutra are Suffering, the Noble Truth of Suffering, the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering and the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering.

2.11- Chapter 11. The Four Inversions**.** One, where there is no suffering, one thinks it is suffering, where there is suffering, one thinks it is happiness, where happiness is thought it is suffering; Two, impermanence is thought to be permanent, permanence is thought to be impermanent; Three, non-self is thought to be self, self is thought to be non-self; Four, purity is thought to be impure, impurity is thought to be purity[64]. Clearly knowing the four inversions is called having the right views.

2.12- Chapter 12. Tathagata Nature. Tathagata nature is the nature that is not covered by afflictions. Ego is the meaning of Tathagatagarbha. All sentient beings have Buddha nature, which is the meaning of self. Tathagata shows sentient beings to recognize Buddha nature like a poor person recognizes that he has a treasure in his house. Tathagata teaches the practice of Anatta, which is not true, but only a means to end the mind of clinging to self, to attain purity. Buddha nature is the form of self that is beyond the world, like diamond, nothing can destroy it. The Mahayana Sutra of the Lotus Sutra is like nectar to the wise, relying on cultivation to reach Great Nirvana; Sometimes it is like poison to the ignorant, never seeing the Buddha nature[65].

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[64] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.237
[65] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.253

2.13- Chapter 13. Text. At first, the Buddha spoke the semi-words with fourteen syllables to serve as a foundation for ordinary people to study and learn the treatises, literary incantations, and aggregates. Knowing that those dharmas are not dharmas because they are the basis of the afflictions of speech, the Buddha taught that the fourteen syllables are the basis of the self. The full syllable is the basis of all good dharmas of speech[66].

2.14- Chapter 14. The Parable of the Birds. One the kacalindikaka and the other the mandarin duck, the two species of birds, cannot be separated from each other. The Buddha compared, the dharmas of suffering, impermanence, and non-self are also not separated from each other like the other two species of birds. All dharmas are impermanent except Buddha nature and Nirvana. All the sutras and all the meditations and samadhis all return to the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra. The Tathagata liberates all living beings, and when the work is done, he immediately enters Great Nirvana[67]. Wherever there are living beings worthy of being saved, the Tathagata manifests birth there. Although he manifests birth, there is really no birth, so the Tathagata calls it the eternal Dharma.

2.15- Chapter 15. The Moon Parable. The moon neither rises nor sets, but appears in this direction or that direction, sometimes full, sometimes waning. The Tathagata is eternally unchanging, like the moon that is always full, inherently one, shining everywhere, but living beings see different shapes of the moon. The Tathagata's true nature is the Dharmakaya, to teach living beings of the future, manifesting the karma of previous lives, manifesting the precepts. The Mahaparinirvana Sutra is as wonderful as the rising sun dispelling all the mist.

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[66] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.281
[67] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.290

2.16- Chapter 16. Bodhisattvas. Even though the icchantikas hear the sutras, even though they are given merits by Bodhisattvas, they still do not develop the Bodhi mind. They have cut off all good roots, like a burnt seed that cannot sprout. The sutra also affirms that all three vehicles have the same Buddha nature, just as cows have different colors of fur, but their milk, stored in the same bucket, is all white, due to karmic causes and conditions. In the Great Nirvana, there are differences between Bodhisattvas, Sravakas, and Pratyekabuddhas, but all return to the Great Nirvana in the future, so it is called no difference[68] (Thich Tri Tinh, volume 1, p.337).

2.17- Chapter 17. Questions from the Great Assembly. Cunda was allowed to bring his last meal to offer to the Buddha, causing everyone to think that Sundara had great merit. The Buddha's words are not wrong, depending on the subject, depending on the time, because there is a cause for speaking, not contradicting the teaching. One word is not used for all living beings.

2.18- Chapter 18. Actual Illness. Kasyapa told the Buddha, sentient beings have four poisonous arrows of greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance, which are the causes of all kinds of physical and mental illnesses. The cause of not being sick and suffering is because of compassion for sentient beings and providing medicine for the sick. Bodhisattvas who practice Bodhisattva conduct dedicate their good roots to sentient beings to eliminate the three obstacles: afflictions, karma and retribution. The World-Honored One, out of great compassion, for the great assembly to have a firm Bodhi mind, immediately rose and sat cross-legged, his face shining with thirty-two good features, eighty dignified beauties on his body, emitting great light throughout the void, illuminating the ten directions to Avici Hell, declaring the secret treasury of the Tathagata: “All sentient beings have Buddha nature”. There are three types of people who are sick and difficult to

[68] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P.367

cure: those who slander the Mahayana; those who commit the five heinous crimes; and the icchantikas. They cannot develop the mind of Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi. There are five types of people who practice the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutras who are sick and who are: Srotapanna, Sakrdagamin, Anagami, Arhat, and Pratyekabuddha who will attain Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi in the future. The Tathagata is not in these five types.

2.19- Chapter 19. The Holy Actions. The Great Bodhisattva contemplates and practices the five kinds of conduct: They are: 1) holy actions, 2) pure actions, 3) heavenly actions, 4) childlike actions, 5) actions of illness. This chapter talks about the Holy Conduct. The Holy Conduct is the place of practice of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva, with the Holy Precepts, Holy Concentration, Holy Wisdom, the Seven Holy Talents, and the Seven Factors of Enlightenment, and is called a Holy Person. The Bodhisattva practices the Four Noble Truths, deeply observing Suffering, Origin, Extinction, and the Path. In the Holy Path, by practicing the Eight Noble Paths, he sees all dharmas[69]. Bodhisattvas also practice distinguishing between worldly truth and ultimate truth; worldly dharma and supramundane dharma; conditioned and unconditioned; permanence, happiness, self, purity; Buddhist and non-Buddhist teachings; the important thing is what the mind corresponds to; the Buddha taught the methods of contemplation to distinguish between self, non-self, self-possession, permanence, and impermanence. The teachings of the World-Honored Ones have worldly and supramundane language; the great assembly listening to the Dharma has some who seek the Hinayana, some who seek the Mahayana; the Buddha turns the Dharma wheel (for those of middling capacity), turns the great Dharma wheel (for those of superior capacity), and does not preach the Dharma to those of the lowest capacity, the icchantikas.

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[69] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 1, P435

2.20- Chapter 20. Brahmacharya. The Bodhisattva-mahasattva resides in the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana, resides in the seven good dharmas, and has complete Brahmacharya, including: knowing the dharma, knowing the meaning, knowing the time, knowing contentment, knowing oneself, knowing the group, and knowing the hierarchy. The Buddha also taught Bodhisattva Kasyapa about cultivating a mind of renunciation, contemplating the Dharma of Emptiness, internal emptiness, external emptiness, internal and external emptiness, conditioned emptiness, unconditioned emptiness, beginningless emptiness, nature emptiness, emptiness of nothingness, ultimate emptiness, emptiness emptiness, great emptiness. Bodhisattvas who practice the holy conduct use their pure heavenly eyes to see the three karmas of sentient beings, whether their body, mouth, and mind create good or evil karma and the severity of their causes and effects. This is called seeing, knowing, and they attain the four unobstructed wisdoms: unobstructed Dharma, unobstructed meaning, unobstructed compassion, and unobstructed exposition. Bodhisattva always cultivates the six right mindfulnesses: mindfulness of Buddha, mindfulness of Dharma, mindfulness of Sangha, keeping precepts, giving alms, and remembering the heavens.

2.21- Chapter 21. The Child's Conduct. The child demonstrates five things: 1- cannot stand up, walk forward, walk back, talk. 2- cannot name the things. 3- does not know suffering, joy, day, night, father, mother. 4- cannot create big or small things. 5- when crying for toys, receive fake toys and stop crying. Tathagata, Bodhisattva learns from the child's conduct: 1. does not give rise to the dharma characteristics. 2- follow the voice of living beings to make them understand. 3. The mind is equal to all living beings. 4. does not create karma of birth and death, does not retreat from the Bodhi mind. 5. According to the capacity of living beings, speak according to the characteristics of them, thereby destroying the characteristics of living beings to attain great Nirvana. When attaining great Nirvana, there is no more crying, this is called The Child's Conduct.

2.22- Chapter 22. Bodhisattva Highly-Virtuous King. The Great Bodhisattva who practices the Mahaparinirvana Sutra gains ten merits. 1. What has not been heard can be heard; what has been heard can be beneficial; doubt can be eliminated; wisdom is upright; and the secret treasury of the Tathagata can be known[70]. 2. What was not obtained,not seen, not heard, not reached, not known before can now be had all[71]. 3. The Great Bodhisattva abandons compassion to obtain compassion, when he obtains compassion, it is not due to causes and conditions. 4. Has ten things: deep good roots that are not shaken; having a certain concept towards one's own body; not seeing the field of merit and not being the field of merit; cultivating pure deeds of Buddha's land; eliminating the three kinds of surplus; eliminating karmic causes and conditions; clearly knowing causes and conditions; leaving behind enemies; 5. Has five things: the body has all the senses intact; not being born in the borderland; being loved and thought of by the Devas; often being respected by the Devas, the Demon Kings, the Shramana, the Brahmanas; gaining knowledge of past lives[72]. 6. Is that the Bodhisattva practices the Mahaparinirvana Sutra and attains the Vajra Samadhi. 7. Has four things: being close to good friends; concentrating on listening to the Dharma; concentrating on thinking; practicing the Dharma correctly[73]. 8. Eliminating five things (five aggregates); being far away from five things (five hindrances); achieving six things (six thoughts); cultivating five things (five concentrations); maintaining one thing (Bodhi mind); being close to four things (four immeasurable minds); believing in the one truth (Mahayana); a good mind of liberation, and good wisdom of liberation. 9. Is to develop five things: faith; uprightness; precepts; being close to good

[70] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 2, P.17
[71] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 2, P102
[72] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 2, P126
[73] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 2, P132

friends; learning widely and listening to much. 10. Is that the Bodhisattva practices the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment to enter the Great Nirvana of permanence, happiness, self, and purity.

2.23- Chapter 23. The Lion's Roar Bodhisattva. The Lion's Roar Bodhisattva, just like the Lion King knows his own strength and can roar the Lion's roar. He wants eleven things: to destroy those who are not real Lions but pretend to be Lions; to test his own strength; to make his residence pure; for the Lion cubs to know their whereabouts; for the Lions to have no fear in their hearts; for those who sleep to be awakened; for all the wild animals to be diligent and not wild; for other animals to come and pay their respects; to tame the great elephant; to teach his children; and to adorn his retinue[74]. All the animals hearing the Lion's roar are terrified and run away. The Tathagata, the Perfectly Enlightened One, is the Great Lion: Wisdom is the fangs and claws, the four bases of spiritual power are the legs, the six paramitas are the body, the ten powerful powers of wisdom are the strength, great compassion is the tail, the four meditations are the cave of peace. The Lion's Roar says: "All beings have Buddha nature; the Tathagata is eternal and unchanging." The Buddha taught the monks to practice Precepts, Concentration, and Wisdom as the Bodhisattva's path of non-retrogression, not outside the Noble Eightfold Path, close to Nirvana. All sentient beings have Buddha nature but need to practice the unconditioned Holy Path before they can see it[75].

2.24- Chapter 24. Bodhisattva Kasyapa. The Buddha has complete knowledge of all faculties and wisdom and teaches the Dharma to be transmitted to the Bodhisattvas first, then to the Sravakas, and finally to the Icchantikas. The Buddha's words are good in the beginning, middle, and end, and they fully accomplish pure conduct. Practicing the contemplation of the five aggregates as

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[74] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 2, P197
[75] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 2, P.387

non-self and non-self-possession will lead to the attainment of Arhatship[76]. The wise person observes the afflictions of the outflow of desire, the outflow of existence, and the outflow of ignorance to know how to leave suffering. Observing the five aggregates, observing the actions of body, speech, and mind, one clearly sees the cause and effect in the six paths of samsara. Pure conduct is all dharmas, the Mahaparinirvana Sutra is the treasure in all dharmas[77].

2.25- Chapter 25. Kondanna. Anyone who heard the Buddha's teachings and gained right views, knew the true Dharma, was free from the net of doubts, abandoned wrong views, ended afflictions, and asked to leave home and receive precepts, would all attain the fruits from Srotapanna, Sakridagamin, Anagami, and up to Arhat. The first disciple was Kondanna, and the last was Subhadra. The Buddha manifested inconceivable means to enter Nirvana in the same way as the worldly dharma.

2.26- Chapter 26. Last Teaching. After the Buddha's death, diligently uphold and teach this sutra, which is the true way to repay the Buddha's grace. The sutra is a treasure of Vajra, eternal, happy, self, and pure. Ananda asked the Buddha four ultimate things to benefit the world, and the remaining questions were all explained clearly and in detail by the Buddha. The Buddha also taught how to bury, cremate, and stupa relics so that everyone would know where to take refuge and respectfully make offerings. The Buddha showed the assembly the pure golden body of the Tathagata and emitted immeasurable light of Great Nirvana that shone throughout the ten directions. Whoever saw it was liberated.

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[76] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 2, P452
[77] Thich Tri Tinh, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Volume 2, P.563

2.27- Chapter 27. The Return to the Origin. The Buddha entered and exited the meditation levels twenty-seven times. The World-Honored One lay on his right side on a bed of seven jewels, his head to the North, his feet pointing straight to the South, his face to the West, his back to the East, and right in the middle of the night, he entered the Fourth Meditation in silence and entered Nirvana. The entire world of the ten directions shook, wept, and mourned.

2.28- Chapter 28. The Cremation. The Buddha's equal mind wanted all the worlds to enjoy the merit, so the Buddha's coffin automatically flew around the city walls seven times, for seven days. This chapter describes the whole scene of the cremation of the Buddha's body and the feelings of grief of the heavens and the people. The fire outside the coffin burned the incense tower for seven days before it burned out.

2.29- Chapter 29. Offering the Relics. The Buddha used his great compassion to make the diamond body crumble into small relics and put them in a golden jar, leaving only four small fangs intact. King Ajatashatru and other kings also came to visit but all did not receive the Buddha's relics. They gathered and threatened to use the military force of seven countries to come to Kusinara to take them away. The Brahman Yen advised him to divide the relics into eight equal parts for each country. The Brahman alone asked to ask for the jar used to measure the relics to worship.

Chapter IV: Findings and Compare the Buddha's teachings in the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra

4.1 Similarities

The Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra were preached by the Buddha at the end of his life. The basic teachings of these two sutras are: All sentient beings have Buddha nature. In the Lotus Sutra, it is called the One Vehicle to indicate the same meaning. This means that all sentient beings can become Buddhas, which is the goal on the path of cultivation. In the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha affirmed that there is only one vehicle, the Buddha vehicle. The two vehicles and three vehicles are just stopovers as the Buddha taught in the Parable of the Transformation City. This is considered a skillful means in the Lotus Sutra. To reach that goal, one must understand the Buddha nature that exists in all sentient beings. In the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the Buddha gave many profound examples, to help sentient beings understand what Buddha nature is, Buddha also used many examples to guide, such as in ore there is gold, but it cannot be seen, it must have sufficient causes and conditions to exist. Buddha nature is not Buddha, because the causes and conditions of merit are not sufficient, so it cannot be seen. When talking about the meaning of existence and non-existence: taking a tangerine seed and planting it, when it grows into a tree, the seed is lost (previously there, now there is none), the tree grows strong and bears fruit, the ripe fruit is sweet (previously there is none, now there). Or say that it will only exist in the future: someone asked why they planted sesame, the sesame planter replied that it was because there was oil. There is no oil now, but when the sesame plant grows up, has seeds, is fake, and is pressed,

the oil will flow out. So, this person is not talking about nothingness, because it implies that it will exist in the future, thereby also clarifying the understanding of causality.

The second basic thing, the Dharma body of Buddha is indestructible. To understand this, Buddha distinguished that a sentient being has three types of bodies: reward body, response body, and Dharma body. Reward body (Sambhogakaya, hojin) is the body obtained from parents and merits created in past lives. For example, the Buddha has thirty-two good features and eighty beautiful features. The body is made of four elements subject earth, water, wind, fire, to impermanence and destruction. Response body (Nirmànakàya, hojin) is the body that responds to different roles. The Buddha has enough supernatural powers to transform, appearing in different realms to preach the wonderful Dharma. Our response body, when we go to school, we are professors, students, when we go home, we are fathers, mothers, grandparents, children... Dharma body (Dharmakaya, hosshin) is the real body of the Buddha, eternal, unchanging, pure, the Buddha nature. We also have the Buddha nature, but it is hidden by afflictions, lacking mindfulness.

Seeing Buddha nature, sentient beings are eternal, happy, selfless, and pure; not seeing Buddha nature, they are impermanent, unhappy, selfless, and impure. Buddha nature, the Tathagata sees it completely, the Ten-stage Bodhisattva sees it partially but thanks to the power of the Shurangama Samadhi, he sees it clearly. Bodhisattvas must fully accomplish ten dharmas to see Buddha nature but not clearly, which are: little desire, contentment, tranquility, diligence, right mindfulness, right concentration, right wisdom, liberation, praise of liberation, and use of Great Nirvana to teach sentient beings. As for sentient beings, it is like not seeing the moon at the beginning of the month, but that does not mean that there is no moon. The Buddha taught the

monks to practice Precepts, Concentration, and Wisdom as the Bodhisattva's path of non-retrogression, not outside the Noble Eightfold Path, close to Nirvana.

The Buddha's Dharma body is eternal and unchanging. He manifests in the world to save sentient beings in the world of Jambudvipa. When his teachings were fully transmitted, preserved and transmitted forever by gods and humans, he manifested his entry into Nirvana. All were manifestations of sentient beings: birth, having parents, having a wife and children, leaving home, practicing asceticism, appearing sick, entering Nirvana, all were means to teach sentient beings to awaken, escape suffering, and become Buddhas.

Both sutras begin with miraculous events, the Buddha emitted light to all three realms and ten directions, the Bodhisattvas entered samadhi, describing the miraculous scene preparing to receive the Buddha's teachings. The Buddha also reiterated to those listening to the Dharma that these sutras had been preached by Buddhas in the past for countless eons. The Buddha and his present disciples had also practiced and studied together for many eons. Those who heard them all had immeasurable blessings. In these events, Buddha wanted all sentient beings to hear the miraculous Dharma, which is very difficult to believe in real life.

Regarding the role of a person who aspires to practice the Bodhisattva path. Both sutras confirm that the Bodhisattva's practice is different from the practice of the Sravakas Pratyekabuddhas. Bodhisattvas practice the One Vehicle. The One Vehicle is the Buddha Vehicle, seeing the Buddha nature in every living being. Doing everything for the sake of Bodhisattvas practices, not considering afflictions as hatred, Bodhisattvas are born and cycle through the realms to teach and transform living beings. From afflictions, we learn patience, diligently practice and contemplate the cause of afflictions is love.

In the article "Basic teachings of the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra", Dr. Tony Page writes that Bodhisattvas must first attain Enlightenment and Nirvana for themselves, and then they will be in the best position to lead others to attain them as well. However, while one is seeking Enlightenment for oneself, one should also act for the benefit of others. The motivation to attain Enlightenment must be the dual motivation of finding lasting happiness for oneself and showing the way to that happiness to others.

In both sutras, the Buddha emphasized that future disciples who preserve and propagate the sutras will have merit and become Buddhas. In the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha recounts the practice journeys of many Bodhisattvas in the lives of past Buddhas. In his previous life, the Buddha was a Bhikkhu Bodhisattva named “Never Disparaging.” He said to everyone he met, “I dare not disrespect you, you will all become Buddhas.” He became Buddhas through upholding, reciting, and preaching the Lotus Sutra. In the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the Bodhisattvas who appear in the chapters also practiced with the Buddha for many kalpas, such as Bodhisattvas: Kasyapa, Lion's Roar Bodhisattvas, for the benefit of living beings, manifested themselves to ask questions for the Buddha to explain, helping practitioners not to go astray.

Regarding the path of practice, the Buddha taught all living beings, the heavens, the human world, the three realms and ten directions, so every time the Buddha preached the Dharma, all realms gathered, respectfully made offerings, praised the Buddha and begged to hear the essential Dharma. In the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, when hearing the news that the Buddha was about to enter Nirvana, there were many groups from heaven, humans to hungry ghosts, animals who wanted to come and offer the last meal to an enlightened being, praying to have blessings. Everyone was sad

and lamented, seeing "the world was empty", and also wanted to have the Buddha's relics to worship.

Regarding the content of the examples, there are many similarities in the two sutras. In the Lotus Sutra there is an example of “a pearl tied in the corner of the robe” in the “Five Hundred Disciples Receive Prophecies” chapter, in the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, “Tathagata Nature” chapter there is an example of a poor girl in her house who has many treasures of pure gold but does not know it. Or like a great strong man with a diamond attached to his forehead, when he hits something the diamond sinks into his skin, thinking that his diamond has been lost, the doctor shows him. These examples all imply that all sentient beings have Buddha nature which is precious, but are blinded by greed, anger, and ignorance so they do not know it, and are resigned to living in poverty, until someone shows them to escape poverty. In the chapter “The poor son parable” in the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha searches for his lost son who is living in poverty to give him his inheritance. With the same meaning, in the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the “Longevity” chapter, the Buddha gave an example of a wealthy person about to go far away who knew how to find a trustworthy young person to entrust his money to, and when he returned, he received all the gold and silver he had entrusted. Likewise, the Buddha entrusted the Dharma to the Bodhisattvas who were wise, but not to the disciples of the Sravakas, who had short lives and limited knowledge, and were not capable of preserving the Dharma treasure for a long time. In the “Medicinal Herbs” chapter of the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha appeared like rain falling, causing all kinds of plants, big and small, to benefit. The Buddha’s words were like rain of Dharma, and each person could receive them without any hindrance, depending on their capacity. In the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the “Bodhisattva” chapter, the Buddha compared the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to a good physician who knew all the sciences of medicine and could cure all diseases, except those who were

determined to die, who could not be cured, and those who had lost all their good roots could not comprehend the Dharma. In the “The Parable of the Illusory City” chapter of the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha compared the path to liberation (Buddhahood) to be very long and far, so to prevent sentient beings from becoming discouraged, the Buddha divided it into many stages, so there are three vehicles (Pratyekabuddhas) and two vehicles (Sravakas). These are resting stations to relieve fatigue and then continue to the destination.

In both sutras, the first chapter, which is also called “preface chapter”, describes the extremely miraculous scene at the time when the Buddha began to preach the sutra, gathering all the elements besides the Buddha’s disciples, including gods, spirits, and demons from the ten directions. However, in the Lotus Sutra, after the Buddha heard the Buddha speak the wonderful Dharma that had never been spoken before, up to five thousand people left. These were the people who practiced according to the two vehicles and three vehicles, because they were attached to the Dharma practice, thinking that they had reached the full result and therefore did not need to know anything more. The Buddha said that the remaining people were the solid seeds, those who had enough foundation to listen to the superior Dharma.

In the Lotus Sutra, there is the "Entrustment” chapter, where the Buddha three times rubbed the heads of the Bodhisattvas and entrusted them to preserve and teach the sutra so that sentient beings can see the Buddha’s wisdom. In the “ Last Teaching” chapter of the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the Buddha resolved all doubts, and in his final words, the Buddha advised his disciples to diligently practice the Mahaparinirvana Dharma. In both sutras, the Buddha taught his disciples to teach the sutra so that sentient beings can see the Buddha nature to repay the Buddhas.When a disciple of the Buddha breaks the precepts, does not respect and believe in the sutras, does not

uphold, recite, and preach, and is not offered alms by everyone, that is the time when the Buddha's teachings are about to perish.

4.2 About translation

Most translators when translating the two sutras relied on the translation by Kumarajiva from Sanskrit to Chinese. Eastern translators often translated the entire sutra. Some translators also added explanations to help students of the sutra understand the meaning of the sutra thoroughly, such as the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua who translated and lectured on the Lotus Sutra in five volumes. Venerable Thich Huyen Chau spent 126 hours lecturing on the Lotus Sutra. Currently, the Venerable is lecturing on the Mahaparinirvana Sutra for nearly half of the second volume with 266 hours of lecturing, starting from the beginning of year 2022 until now. Venerable Thich Tu Thong translated and extensively lectured on both sutras. Lay Buddhists Doan Trung Con and Nguyen Minh Tien translated and interpreted the Mahaparinirvana Sutra based on the translations of Master Fa Xian (Chinese) and Master Dam Wo Sam (Indian), along with the section "Overview of the Mahaparinirvana Sutra" with information down to every small detail in the sutra, extremely elaborate and fully convincing to readers. In addition, there are many, many translators who choose to translate some chapters in the sutra, such as the Venerable Tue Sy who translated the chapter “The Bodhisattvas Emerging out of the Ground” Of the Lotus Sutra, or the Venerable Thich Tri Quang who has many lectures on the meaning of the Lotus in the Lotus Sutra. The Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh with the topic “There is mud, there is lotus”. Looking at it from another perspective, Yune Leou-on wrote The Lotus Sutra as Literature[78] .

[78] University of San Francisco - July 22,2015

Western authors, the Lotus Sutra is the first Buddhist sutra to be translated from Sanskrit into a Western language. In 1844, the eminent scholar Eugène Burnouf translated the sutra into French. In the same year, some parts of the Lotus Sutra appeared in English in The Dial, a magazine of New England Transcendentalists. The sutra is titled "The White Lotus of the Dharma", translated by Peter Alan Roberts and posted on the 84000 websites, translated into many languages, attracting many interested readers. Currently, there are many people who have translated the sutra completely from the East to the West. But there are also some who choose to translate the main parts, such as Stephen Hodge who translated the Mahaparinirvana Sutra in the form of main excerpts. Or like Donals S. Lopez, Jr. is the Arthur E. Link Distinguished University Professor of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies at the University of Michigan, he wrote a biography of the Lotus Sutra from India to China, through Japan, across the Atlantic to the Pacific, extremely bustling and interesting. He explored how it was read by great literary figures such as Henry David Thoreau and Gustave Flaubert. Many other authors focus on studying some ideas or analyzing examples in the sutra. The author Abira Bhattacharya, after talking about the nature of "Emptiness" in the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the author is interested and interested in the stone tablets, pilgrimages, rituals of people to the relics of the Buddha, especially about the division and worship of the Buddha's relics according to the teachings of the person before entering Nirvana.

The Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra Translated into English by Kosho Yamamoto[79], 1973 from Dharmakshema's Chinese version has translated the Mahaparinirvana Sutra into 46 chapters, because there are very long chapters in the sutra, the translator divided the chapters into many chapters: The Bodhisattva Highly-Virtuous King chapter, divided into 6 chapters; The On

[79] Kosho Yamamoto, Taisho Tripitaka Vol. 12, No. 374

Bodhisattva Lion's Roar chapter, divided into 8 chapters; The On Bodhisattva Kasyapa chapter, divided into 5 chapters; On Bodhisattva Kasyapa chapter, divided into 4 chapters; And the On Kaundinya chapter, the last chapter of the sutra to be translated, divided into 2 chapters. The last chapters such as Last Teaching, The Return to the Origin, The Cremation, and Offering the Relics are not found in the translation by Kosho Yamamoto.

In modern times, because of his great love for the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, Dr. Tony Page has created a Blog dedicated to this Sutra, which presents the basic teachings of the Sutra, excerpts from other authors, and has his own commentary on the Nirvana Sutra in Tibet, and articles on the topics of the Sutra such as the true self, skillful means. The page also talks about scholars, Zen masters, such as the British mystic - Dr. Paul Brunton[80], a dedicated seeker of spiritual truth, who traveled in the East in the 1930s, exploring and practicing both Hinduism and Buddhism, with his books The Wisdom of the Overself and Notebooks; Zen Master Sokei-an Sokei-An was one of the first Japanese Zen masters to teach Zen in America.

With the trend of Western translators omitting repetitive sentences, abridging the Sutras with highlights, in their opinion, it has inspired those who are a little interested to pay more attention to the spiritual life of the mysterious East. Perhaps that is the way that is suitable for Western culture and thinking. However, each teaching in the Sutra contains many profound meanings, so to fully understand the Buddha's teachings, complete translations and especially lectures by masters who have practiced and realized cannot be ignored. Just like the person standing outside the wall of the flower garden looking at the flowers can see the general beauty of the flower garden, but the person who steps into the garden to look at each type of flower can see

[80] Paul Brunton, 1898 - 1981

its ultimate beauty. At some point, the person standing outside the garden will step into the garden to look at each flower. Soon, when the AI Dharma system is officially launched, everyone in the world will have the opportunity to step into the flower garden of Buddha Dharma to have the opportunity to look at each beautiful flower.

4.3- Differences between the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra

In both sutras, the Buddha used examples to clearly illustrate what he wanted to say. However, in the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha analyzed the examples in each chapter. There are seven examples in total, including the example of the "burning house" in the third chapter "examples"; "The poor child" in the fourth chapter titled "faith and understanding"; "The medicinal herb example" in the fifth chapter; “The Parable of the Illusory City” in the seventh chapter; "The pearl in the robe" in the eighth chapter "The five hundred disciples receiving the prophecy"; "The pearl in the king's hair bun" in the fourteenth chapter "Peaceful conduct"; "The physician and his children" in the sixteenth chapter "The life span of the Tathagata". In the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the Buddha gave countless small examples to explain each teaching. As an illustration of the teaching that “all dharmas are pure conduct”, the Buddha compared the Mahaparinirvana Sutra to the ocean, to Mount Sumeru, to the void, to a strong wind, to a diamond substance, to the sands of the Ganges River; the Sutra is the dharma-cover of the Bodhisattva, to a teacher leading merchants to the ocean, to a light for the Bodhisattva, to a good medicine, to a stick, to a ferry, et. One can read over twenty-five small examples so that the listener can visualize the Dharma as pure conduct. Or to explain the meaning of Mahaparinirvana liberation, the Buddha compared liberation to nothingness, to no illness, no loss, no struggle, to peace, stability, no sorrow, no joy, no worries, no dust, no pressure, rare, immeasurable, et. One can read over eighty examples. Regarding the

ten titles of the Buddha: Tathagata, Arhat, Samyaksambuddha, Perfect in Knowledge and Conduct, Well-Gone, Knower of the World, Unsurpassed One, Tamer of Men, Teacher of Gods and Men, Buddha, World-Honored One, in the Lotus Sutra, they are chanted by the Buddha before introducing a Buddha in the past or a Buddha who has been prophesied to become a Buddha in the future, and can be counted more than fifteen times in the sutra; in the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the Buddha only chants these titles a few times or only chants some of the ten titles.

The Mahaparinirvana Sutra mentions a lot about the icchantika class, a class of people who do not have any good roots, so they do not want to nor are able to comprehend the wonderful things in the sutra. In the chapter on "The Lion's Roar Bodhisattva", the Buddha declared, "All sentient beings have Buddha-nature, even an iota has Buddha-nature".

4.4 Findings

The Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra were systematized and edited by the Patriarchs based on the content of the Buddha's teachings in the last eight years before he entered Nirvana. These are two massive Sutras in the Mahayana canon, containing immeasurable meanings, profound and secret meanings that cannot be clearly expressed to the listener in words, so the Buddha used examples to describe and help the listener recognize the profound meaning of those teachings, that is, using events to explain principles. Both Mahayana Sutras were preached by the Buddha to his disciples and many others who wanted to hear his teachings on his journey of propagating the Dharma and saving sentient beings.

In many lifetimes of practice, Shakyamuni Buddha in his present life started out as a Bodhisattva named Guangzhu in hell, clearly knowing the reason why he was condemned to hell

for being unfilial to his mother, so he vowed to cultivate into a Buddha in the Saha world to teach sentient beings there to learn how to be grateful and repay their kindness. The Bodhisattva has gone through many lifetimes of practice with a diligent mind and in the present life, which is the last life, he has attained Nirvana. The Buddha gave us a lesson about diligence through the Four Right Efforts in the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment, which are diligence for the good that has not yet arisen to arise; diligence for the good that has already arisen to develop; diligence for the evil that has not yet arisen to not arise; diligence for the evil that has already arisen to reduce. In our lives, when good or evil appears, there are signs. Those who are astute will recognize it. It is like seeing flowers blooming, knowing that spring has come, seeing dark clouds appearing in the sky, it is sure that it is about to rain. The Buddha's appearance to teach the wonderful Dharma to save sentient beings is the ultimate good sign, those with the right capacity will have the opportunity to hear the essential Dharma.

The reason why Buddha appeared in the world is only for one thing: "to teach sentient beings, to realize the Buddha's knowledge". This is a profound and wonderful Dharma, difficult to understand, so it is easy to have doubts. If you have doubts and do not try to understand them completely, you are guilty of your own fault, showing a lack of blessings. Benefits will come to those who know how to seek knowledge and learn. Learning the Buddha Dharma is even more difficult, people who are often skeptical, have a low nature, and are arrogant and attached cannot approach the Buddha Dharma.

In the Sutras, Buddha uses examples, analyzes examples, describes what Buddha wants to convey, wise people use examples to make the meaning clear. Sentient beings have different karma, so their natures are also different, so wise people must use many means to guide them.

Therefore, Buddha's teachings are always in a context, a specific object and bring benefits to that object. When we study the sutras, we need to have the right intention, if we have the wrong intention, we think that Buddha's words have many contradictions. The Buddha compared living beings who are still immersed in the three dangerous realms of Desire, Form and Formlessness to being in a burning house. If they do not escape quickly, they cannot avoid an accident. The Buddha is like a father who feels sorry for his ignorant child, not knowing that an accident is lurking, so he tries his best to save his child. Foolish children do not understand the hearts of their parents, and when they encounter something bad, they sometimes blame their parents. In the example of the "Burning House", the rich man symbolizes the Buddha, the Buddha is the Mind; the children are a metaphor for living beings; the burning fire represents impermanence and destruction; the snakes represent the suffering of living beings, birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow and ignorance; the three carts represent the three vehicles or the three levels of practice: Sravaka, Pratyekabuddha, Bodhisattva; the largest cart is the One Vehicle or Buddha Vehicle; the rich man's children running out of the burning house shows that living beings, thanks to the lure of the Three Vehicles, leave the three realms, attain peace and happiness, which is Nirvana. Buddha wanted to teach that everyone has within themselves all the potential to create merit. Knowing how to exploit the treasure trove will bring miraculous results.

The Buddha compared sentient beings and the Buddha to living together in a place of purity and clarity, but sentient beings crave the ordinary world and lose their wisdom, suffering much sorrow and affliction in many reincarnations. The father, because he misses his son, travels far and wide to find him, like the Buddha, because he wishes to save sentient beings, manifested in this impure world. The father is extremely rich, the Buddha showing that he has all the blessings and dignity, while the son is poor and miserable, with little blessings and many sins, and his mind is

full of gossip, so he does not dare to think that he also has noble qualities like his father. Sentient beings inherently have the nature of enlightenment, but they consider themselves inferior because they are accustomed to the filthy, ordinary things of the five desires. The father must use many ways to persuade the son to believe in his origin. Just like the Buddha, by means of letting sentient beings know that they have Buddha nature, they can inherit the precious inheritance of the Tathagata.

The nature of sentient beings is not the same, but the Buddha preaches the Dharma equally, so that all can benefit. For example, with medicinal herbs, the small grass represents the human vehicle and the heavenly vehicle; the grass medium represents both the Sravaka and Pratyekabuddha, and the large grass represents the Bodhisattva. The Buddha's Dharma is like a rain that waters everywhere, all benefit. Prophecy is the work of the Buddhas of the ten directions; it is the confirmation of the merit and achievements of the disciple's practice. Prophecy does not mean the Buddha's bestowal. The Buddha prophecies because that person is worthy to receive the results of his practice. Like the Buddha Dipankara in the past, the Buddha's previous life as Prince Sumedhà, spread his hair for the Buddha to walk on, and offered flowers, and was prophesied by the Buddha that he would become a Buddha called Shakyamuni. The Buddhas see the potential with their wisdom, just like an experienced gardener can see the fruit that will come to fruition in the future by looking at a sprouting seed.

The Buddha used the example of the Transformation City, which has a very profound meaning. On a long journey, people with weak willpower often think that they do not have enough strength to go the whole way, and it is easy to give up right from the start, so the experienced guide divides the path into three sections. In fact, there is only one path, the One Vehicle (in the Buddha

Vehicle, the destination), divided into the Three Vehicles, relying on the weak will to seek liberation of living beings to lead living beings to the ultimate liberation. The teachings of the Four Noble Truths and the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination are taught to the Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, which are the Three Vehicles and Two Vehicles. When their minds have undergone practice and their faculties are quite sharp, the Buddha lets his disciples stop and rest by transforming a city but then makes it clear that this place is only for temporary rest, because the goal to reach is still ahead, which is to ultimately become a Buddha. So, the three vehicles are only means, those who cling to the means will stop and not continue to the destination. They were arrogant people and did not want to continue, because they thought that the fruit they had achieved was the destination. The Buddha declared that those who remained were only solid seeds, which would inevitably grow strong branches and give sweet fruit.

When the disciples received the Buddha's prophecy, they were very happy, comparing themselves to people who had a pearl in their clothes but did not know it, and accepted a life of hardship. The drunkard's friend put the pearl in his friend's shirt, like the Buddha when he was a Bodhisattva planted in each of our hearts the aspiration to seek the wisdom of a fully enlightened person, but we were like drunkards, not knowing anything, accepting a life of hardship and toil, thinking it was enough. The mind of the Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas is also like that, having only achieved a little result, they think it is enough, until the World-Honored One clearly points it out and they immediately awaken. Each of us has the inherent Buddha-nature, like a priceless pearl, which is the original mind that is always pure. The Buddha is the one who reveals, and it is the sentient beings who are enlightened and enter the Buddha's Knowledge.

A Dharma Master is a Dharma teacher, who can be a monk, a scholar, a researcher, who shares and teaches people based on what he knows about the Buddha's teachings. It can also be understood in another sense, that is, a person who takes the Dharma as a teacher, relies on the Dharma like relying on a torch to light up the path of practice to be clear, quickly reaching the destination.

The Stupa refers to the Dharma body, Buddha nature, the pure mind of each sentient being. The stupa of the Buddha Prabhutaratna rises from the ground, which is the mind-ground, that is, the ground of one's own mind. When the Lotus Sutra is practiced absolutely, ignorance and afflictions are erased, and the Dharma body is miraculously manifested. When the Buddha's mind resides in one's mind, everything around becomes solemn. Devadatta represents the obstacles on the Buddha's path of practice, thanks to which the Buddha strives to improve. Therefore, obstacles can be seen as good friends, opportunities to improve without resentment.

The dragon girl is an animal, but the Buddha nature is still present in her mind, thanks to the upholding of the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha nature is manifested. The Buddha nature is equal to all living beings. The Buddha prophesied for the Bhikkhunis to maintain the Dharma of the Buddha in the human world and in other realms to save the stubborn and difficult to save sentient beings. The Buddha expressed equality, a revolutionary view in the long-standing male-dominated society of India. The Buddha was a great revolutionary in equality and egalitarianism that modern society could not keep up with.

The purpose of studying and practicing is to practice attaining peace. Afflictions in the mind are a kind of demon, when the afflictions in the mind are gone, there is peace. The Buddha's teachings are very simple: do not do evil, only do good, keep the mind pure. It sounds easy to say,

even a child can say it, but an old person of seventy may not be able to practice it. The Buddha affirmed that practicing the Sutras means having peace in this life. Happiness is not the destination, but happiness is every step on the path. Wherever afflictions are eliminated, there is peace. Our lesson is self-reliance, knowledge from within is the Buddha's knowledge, which comes from concentration.

The Buddha's Dharma body, that is, the Buddha nature that both the Buddha and sentient beings have, is eternal and indestructible. The Buddha's manifestation of Nirvana is a means of educating sentient beings. When the Buddha is present forever in the world, it causes disciples to lack diligence and rely on others, because the Buddha is always guiding and reminding them to practice. The Buddha's teachings are complete, but because of negligence, living beings do not practice. Practicing will bring results, achieving complete enlightenment.

Those who understand the Buddha's teachings will immediately develop the mind. There are two types of merit: Leaked and unleashed. Leaked merit brings worldly blessings, remaining in the world to enjoy blessings, accepting the cycle of birth and death. Only unleashed blessings are blessings that transcend the world, far from birth and death, becoming the Omniscient One.

The Buddha taught about the practice of rejoicing. Rejoicing is when you see others doing good things and you are happy and respond to them, then you have a lot of merit. On the contrary, it is not uncommon for us to see others doing good things that we cannot do, and we often become jealous and criticize, that is, people who do not have a heart of rejoicing. This person will certainly receive bad karma. People who wholeheartedly uphold, recite, preach and practice according to the Sutra, then their merit is immeasurable. Because that is the act of giving Dharma. Giving Dharma has more merit than giving material things, it is the ultimate giving, and it brings about immaculate blessings. It is like a torch lit by many people, from the first to the last flame will be

bright. Those who slander the sutras will lose their Buddha-nature and will inevitably fall. Reading, reciting, preaching, and copying the Sutras has the merit of purifying the six senses. The Sutras help practitioners attain immaculate blessings, which are the blessings of liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

The name of each Bodhisattva speaks of his or her practice. Bodhisattva Never Disparaging Anyone, because he knows that all sentient beings have the potential to become Buddhas. The Bodhisattva himself lives in the Dharma Image Age and only proclaims it out of faith and worship. Because he did not study the Dharma, the Bodhisattva did not have enough reasoning to explain clearly, causing the listener to not understand the meaning of his words, and not to agree, but to curse him because he thought it was a false prophecy. When he was about to die, he heard the Lotus Sutra. This can be understood as a rebirth of the Bodhisattva, because of upholding the Sutra, he was born with blessings, his six senses were pure, and his words were convincing. Those who did not believe and heard the Sutra suffered the consequences, for many lifetimes they did not meet the Buddha, meet the Sangha, nor hear the Dharma. They did not see the Buddha nature in their own minds. The story of Bodhisattva Never Disparaging is a lesson for the journey of practice. If you find yourself following a way of practice for a long time without results, you must review your practice, seek to learn, and change your practice method to be more effective.

The long and wide tongue of the Buddha does not mean physically but refers to the sound of the Buddha's Dharma. The Buddha's teachings are the truth, so they have won over all kinds of beings. Every gesture, word and action of the Buddha is a lesson, neither too much nor too little. Words that have the power to convince others are people with the power of their tongue, so that even if there is time and space distance, they have the power to convince. Today, Buddhism has an influence across the five continents, showing that the Buddha's teachings come from the words

of an enlightened being full of wisdom and have the power to convince. The time we are living in, in terms of time, is called the end of Dharma, which means the time when the Dharma is about to be destroyed. However, if that Dharma is still studied and practiced by many people, then the Buddha's words will forever resonate, and the Dharma will continue to be transmitted. When the Dharma is propagated, wherever the Dharma spreads, the tongue spreads out, covering everywhere, creating extraordinary power, transforming ignorance into enlightenment, transforming ordinary people into saints, that is the supernatural power of the long and wide tongue of the Buddha. Tathagata does not come from anywhere, nor does he go anywhere, because the mind does not discriminate, it becomes powerful, nothing can obstruct it.

The Buddha trusted countless great Bodhisattvas, so he entrusted them with the responsibility of upholding, reciting, and proclaiming the Sutras for all sentient beings to hear and know so that they can gain the Buddha's wisdom. The Buddha is the Great Giver, with great compassion, without any fear, proclaiming the wish. The Bodhisattvas who carry out this entrustment are repaying the Buddhas' grace.

The person who upholds the Sutras has many benefits, bringing much greater merit than all kinds of offerings, because it helps to escape all suffering, to attain peace and liberation. The concept of burning the body as an offering does not mean burning the physical body but the act of burning, destroying the ego-clinging that has stuck in the mind for many lifetimes, from coarse to subtle, which is an obstacle to the path to enlightenment. The time of burning the body symbolizes the time of destroying all the fundamental afflictions that cling to the mind. Leaving the mortal body to obtain the priceless eternal Dharma body, transforms the mind from a mortal to a saint. The Buddha and Bodhisattvas were born to fulfill their vows to cure the afflictions and attachments of living beings. The Buddha's Dharma is like a good medicine that cures the illnesses of living

beings. There is no medicine that can cure all kinds of illnesses, only the medicine that cures the right illness is a good medicine. When the vow is completed and there is a successor, the Buddha and Bodhisattva have no reason to stay. Staying even a minute is redundant. Learning this virtue, in our lives there are activities from the outside that cause our minds to be disturbed and afflicted. When we finish the work, we must turn inward to recharge our energy, not be drawn away by the outside world, losing our own pure mind.

When in samadhi, one can clearly perceive everything around. The deeper the samadhi, the further the perception. Returning to the inner self, when the mind is completely pure and peaceful, looking back at oneself is to see the Buddha in the mind, see the inner strength, and turn ignorance into enlightenment. Cultivation is to create good merit, having good merit, meeting enough good conditions will produce good results. A good friend is someone who guides you on the right path. It can be someone close to you, or meeting by chance, all are the causes of cultivation in many lives.

The Buddha, the Teacher of Gods and Men, was about to enter Nirvana, causing the great earth to shake. All saw the world empty and earnestly requested the World-Honored One to remain in the world. All gathered and brought precious offerings to the Buddha, hoping that the Buddha would accept his last meal. All were not granted by the Buddha because “it was not the right time”. Because these groups understood that the Buddha entering Nirvana was the abandonment of the physical body, that it would no longer exist forever, but did not understand the true meaning of the Buddha's manifestation of entering Nirvana, so they were sad and cried. The Buddha was waiting for Cunda to appear. The name Cunda means "understanding the wonderful meaning". The Buddha's Dharma body is a diamond body, indestructible which is the meaning of the Tathagata's expedient way of entering Nirvana.. The Buddha accepted Cunda's offering of food, which made

him complete the practice of Dana Paramita. The Bodhisattvas, on behalf of the four groups, asked about doubts in the practice of Mahayana teachings, just as one who knows how to use the right medicine for the right illness, the medicine is a wonderful medicine.

When the Buddha taught about impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and non-self, he was talking about the method of contemplating conditioned dharmas. Conditioned dharmas are subject to destruction, so these methods of contemplation are called without real meaning. The Dharma Body of the Buddha is the true meaning of eternal happiness, self, and purity. The Buddha's words are true words, without contradiction before and after, only because the listener has not fully understood the meaning.

The Dharma Body of the Buddha is constant and unchanging. The Buddha taught that in order to achieve this, Bodhisattvas must protect all living beings, teach them to practice good dharmas, keep precepts, and protect the Dharma. One must use the eyes of wisdom to see. The Buddha, because of many lifetimes of practicing the Bodhisattva's conduct and protecting the Dharma, has an indestructible diamond body.

Chapter V- Conclusion.

This chapter will address the project's research questions.

5.1- Answering research questions.

Why is the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra said to be the king of sutras? The Lotus Sutra is said to be the best of all sutras, because this is the sutra that teaches the method of cultivating to create pure merit, the method of liberation. The Dharma of the Lotus Sutra is a good medicine, which can benefit and save all living beings from suffering. This sutra is the best, called the king of sutras. The Mahaparinirvana Sutra is a synthesis of all the methods of cultivation, answering all the doubts through the questions of the foremost Bodhisattvas. The light of the Mahaparinirvana Sutra is the most excellent, shining on all living beings, helping them to eliminate afflictions. Bodhisattvas hear this wonderful Mahayana sutra, develop the Bodhi mind and see the Buddha nature. The Buddha manifests expediently to save all living beings, so he is called the Supreme Boat Master, with enough power to take people across the great ocean. In this sense, the Mahaparinirvana Sutra is called the King of Sutras.

Why is it said that the Buddha's wisdom is the Wisdom of No Teacher? The Buddha's wisdom is the wisdom of knowing everything, called the All-Knowing Wisdom. This wisdom is natural wisdom, which each person cultivates and develops from within, from the internal force. The Buddha practiced the Dharma of Unsurpassed Perfect Enlightenment for countless eons. After attaining enlightenment, the Buddha went to find his fellow ascetics, the five brothers Kondanna, to teach the wonderful Dharma. On the way, the Buddha met a young man, seeing the Buddha's majestic appearance, so he asked the Buddha how he practiced? Who was the Buddha's Teacher?

The Buddha replied that he cultivated and realized by himself, there was no Teacher, he was the Teacherless Wisdom.

Why not call Buddha a religious leader? Buddha is different from other religious leaders. Most religions require followers to worship the religious leader (if you worship them, you will go to heaven, if you don't, you will go to hell). A follower is always a follower; no follower is equal to the religious leader. While Buddha declared: "All sentient beings have Buddha nature, I am a Buddha who has attained, sentient beings are Buddhas who will attain". Buddha is a great donor, great compassion, equally teaching wonderful Dharma so that everyone could achieve. Buddha does not require everyone to believe immediately but depending on the capacity and interests of sentient beings, using many means to guide, from there sowing the seeds of Buddha Dharma. Buddha also taught his disciples to do the same. Sakya Buddha University is the place where we are studying this, striving to do everything, overcoming all difficulties to propagate the Dharma is a practical and meaningful way to show gratitude to Buddha.

Why did the Buddha entrust his teachings to the Bodhisattvas in the Saha world and not to Bodhisattvas from outside? This is to emphasize the need for self-reliance from within, not relying on external forces. Living in the same place, one always knows clearly the characteristics and nature of the place where one lives. The role of a Bodhisattva is to vow to do everything for the purpose of saving sentient beings as well as saving oneself: Enlightenment, enlightenment of others, and perfect enlightenment. A Bodhisattva would rather give up his own body to save sentient beings than to ignore a sentient being in suffering.

The Buddha's will, instructing how to cremate, preserve, divide relics, and worship them, shows that the Buddha's wisdom clearly understands the limited knowledge of sentient beings. He

does not want this to cause unnecessary complications, or to ignore or forget the basic and wonderful things that the Buddha wanted to leave behind. The belief that coming to the Dharma is to go on the path of self-salvation is the right thing, it is to show compassion for oneself. Worshiping the Buddha that is already within oneself, building a temple in one's heart are the things that will follow oneself forever. The precious things that are already within each person do not come from the outside, even keeping the Buddha's relics without practicing will not bring any benefits. The Buddha taught so. Everything is just a means, so do not turn the means into a goal. It is called following the conditions but not changing, not changing but following the conditions.

What is called receiving, reciting, copying, and preaching the Sutras? Receiving is to receive; maintaining is to preserve, learn, and follow; reading is to repeat the sutras every day to remember; preaching is to fully understand the meaning of the sutras, to repeat them clearly and accurately so that the listener can practice accordingly. Doing this completely will truly bring merit. Otherwise, it is like a sick person who only looks at and counts the pills but does not take them and will never be cured.

5.2- Limitations.

The Buddha's teachings have many profound meanings that cannot be fully explained in one topic. In the era of information explosion, there is no shortage of misinformation. The Buddha's teachings were originally transmitted orally to each person who had a predestined relationship with him. The translation language is sometimes somewhat subjective or due to limited understanding of history, the time and the people that the Buddha was teaching. There are intentions based on current

thinking to forcefully associate them. For example, the Buddha was born by opening the right side of Queen Maya, after 7 days the queen passed away. Through this incident, some people believe that the Buddha was born by cesarean section, his mother got an infection from the incision, so she died after 7 days. Fully understanding what the manifestation of Buddha and Bodhisattva is requires true practice, proof and seriousness in research. Emotional speculations leave behind many harmful consequences later.

5.3- Strengths of the project.

The received tradition believes that the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra are the last words of an enlightened being, leaving earnest instructions to his disciples like the last words of a kind father leaving instructions to his beloved children before passing away, making those who read it moved. The Mahaparinirvana Sutra includes many contents in which the Buddha answers all the remaining questions through the questioning of the Great Bodhisattvas. The Bodhisattvas are like representatives who ask questions of all subjects from ordinary people to Sravakas, Pratyekabuddhas, Bodhisattvas, even the first class of Chantikas who no longer have any good thoughts, helping the four groups of Buddha's disciples have complete answers in the process of practicing according to His teachings, including those who follow outsiders also have the opportunity to attain liberation and joy. All Dharmas must be compared, in accordance with the Sutras, Vinaya, and Abhidharma, to be considered true Dharma. Rely on the true Dharma, light your own torch, and rely on it to reach your destination. The Sutras are like a review of important practices of Precepts, Concentration, Wisdom, liberation and liberating knowledge, living in peace, mindfulness, and awareness to completely liberate all desires, to escape suffering, and to attain enlightenment, Nirvana.

5.4- Future research.

Buddha said: "The wise man understands through examples". Personally, I am curious, very interested and enjoy the examples that Buddha gave to explain, help understand clearly, not to obscure what he wanted to say. However, every time I re-read the examples, I discover deeper things in Buddha's teachings. This is also what we need to continue to learn and constantly research, in the immediate and long term.

Buddhism is like a vast ocean. The volume of scriptures is enormous. Continuing to research the profound meaning of the scriptures is something that cannot be stopped. The Buddhist scriptures were born in India and brought to China, a place where the thoughts of Lao Tzu and Confucius were deeply rooted in people's lives. The image of a gentleman is an idol, a model for everyone to follow. The appearance of a monk holding an alms bowl is a very difficult image to accept, it goes against the traditional culture of a nation. The Buddhist Patriarchs and disciples, wanting to bring Buddhism to the vast country of China, skillfully compiled it into scriptures called Mahayana, literally meaning a large vehicle that can carry many people. This was accepted by many people, including the leaders of the country at that time, and they became Buddhists. There were times when Buddhism became the state religion. From here, Buddhism spread to Western countries and today it has reached the whole world. Continue to study and research the scriptures to see the spirit of the Dharma, of Theravada and Mahayana, all expressed in the scriptures, like seeing the branches and leaves in a tree. The branches and leaves all come from the root of the tree. The root of the tree is strong thanks to the branches and leaves, that is a close and inseparable relationship. The tree needs both the root and the branches and leaves to exist, from which it flowers and bears fruit. Although it is Foundational in origin, it cannot be said that Mahayana or

any other sect is not taught by the Buddha and thus cannot be rejected or condemned. Even Theravada Buddhists in the present era, in many different countries, cannot practice in the same way as the Sangha during the Buddha's time, such as going on alms round every day, sleeping under a tree, or wearing only three robes, etc. Continuing to study the inseparable connection of Foundational teachings fully expressed in Mahayana scriptures is an exciting and time-consuming study. This study can gather many people, who are not attached, not limited to the Dharma, with open minds, to participate in the study with the massive amount of existing Buddhist scriptures.

5.5- Conclusion:

In summary, the topic has introduced two large and important Sutras of the Mahayana Canon. By skillful means, the Sutras have described the final teachings, covering all the fundamental teachings of the Buddha. The Sutras have attracted increasingly deep research interest from monks on the path of enlightenment, to Buddhist researchers around the world from the beginning to modern times. The philosophy of life of Buddhism is truly a completely intellectual, scientific and practical thinking that enters the lives of all people, expressed through the opinions of eminent monks who practice them and of outstanding researchers. Although the topic focuses on the two sutras of the Lotus Sutra and the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, it presents a comprehensive picture of the path of a Bodhisattva according to the Mahayana teachings, which is completely inseparable from the original teachings of the Buddha, and is also completely suitable for modern life, regardless of religious affiliation or socio-political views. Sakya Budha University's role in promoting the Buddha's teachings is a meaningful and practical work in the present.

The End

Thank You!

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